# A MOST Excellent and comfortable Treatise, for all such as are any maner of way either troubled in mynde or afflicted in bodie,

Made by *Andrew Kingesmyl Gentleman, sometime fellowe of* Alsolne Colledge *in Oxford.*

Whereunto is adioyned a verie godly and learned Exhortation to suffer patiently all afflictions for the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

And also a conference betwixt a godly learned Christian & an afflicted conscience: wherein, by the holy Scriptures the sleightes of Satan are made manifest, and ouerthrowen: with a godly prayer thereunto annexed.

Imprinted by the assignement of C. Barker, and are to be solde at the Blazing Starre at the East ende of Poules.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

# TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

HAuing diuers papers and writinges committed vnto me by a deere friend of mine, whom it pleased God not long since, after many yeeres trauaile very profitably bestowed in the ministery and preaching of the Gospel, to cal out of this miserable wretched and wicked world: And finding amongst the saide writinges this Treatise and the exhortation annexed thereunto: I read both the one and the other all ouer, to mine owne great profite and comfort, I must needs confesse. And therefore perswaded by mine own experience in the reading of both these treatises, that the publishing of them in print might bee no lesse profitable and comfortable to manye others, then to my selfe I founde them: I thought it good not to holde them longer in my priuate custodie as thinges dead and buried with the Authours, but to committe them to the Printer, to haue them communicated to this Church of England, and as many as vnderstand the English, to the praise and glory of God for his gracious giftes in the writers, and for the comfort and instruction (I doubt not) of so many as shall reade them.

Of the Author of the Exhortation, I can saye nothing more then that (as I coniecture by that he

writeth) he liued in the late reigne of Q. Marie, being then an exile in forraine partes for the Gospel, whiche at that time also was banished from hence, as touching the open profession therof in any common and publike places. And as for the matter of his Exhortation, I shall not neede to saye any more in commendation therof to stirre men vp to the reading of it, then the bare title giuen to the same importeth: which with the shortnesse of the Treatise it selfe may suffice to allure any godly and well disposed person to peruse the same.

As touching the Authour of the Treatise whose name I haue expressed, though I could of him saye very much to his great commendation, and that of mine owne knowledge, for that liuing together in one house wee were long time and familiarly acquainted: Yet I will for some respectes forbeare to praise hym for his whole life and death, referring thee to that which is briefly saide of him (and printed before) in a litle booke of his entituled: *The viewe of mans estate: &c.* of whiche booke, though by an other name, himselfe maketh mention in this treatise: and had I knowne so muche before the impression thereof, as I coulde not, this comming so lately and long after to my handes, it shoulde haue borne no other name, then nowe I well perceiue the Authour himselfe called it by: though the title it nowe hath, be not (I trust) improper

proper and impertinent to the matter hee handleth therein. To whom he writ this treatise of comfort, and vppon what occasion, thou mayest easilye perceiue, if thou read the whole all ouer: And though she, to whom he writte the same be yet liuing, and the occasion thereof such as peraduenture some wil mislike of the publishing therof. Yet being certainlye perswaded that neither the writer, if hee were now liuing, or she, to whom he writ, would haue any thing concealed for priuate respectes, that maye serue so wel as this Treatise wil (I am assured) to the edifying & comfort of many: I haue aduentured to be a mean that it might be imprinted, with the approbation of such as by good order in this behalfe are appointed to allow of all suche matters to bee published.

Wherefore, gentle Reader, accept in good parte both this Treatise, and the Exhortation adioyned thereunto: which if they may serue for thy instruction & comfort, as no doubt they wil, thou hast great cause to praise God both for the writers, and things by them written.

*T. mylles.*

# A moſt comfortable Treatiſe written by Andrewe Kingelmill to his ſiſter, very profitable for al men, eſpecially for ſuch as are any maner of way afflicted in body or minde, &c.

God forbid that I ſhould reioyce in anye thing, but in the croſſe of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, whereby the worlde is crucified vnto me, and I vnto the worlde. Gal. 6. 14.

The cauſe that moued the Author to write this Treatiſe.

DEare ſiſter in our Lord & Sauiour Chriſte Ieſus, whereas I vnderſtande of your preſent ſtate & condition, yt hath pleaſed god our heauenly father, ſomewhat to viſite & touch you wt his heauy hād, to chaſtiſe you with the rod of his correction, & to lay vpon you ſome part of ye croſſe of his Chriſt: Had I a far better talent thē I haue, whiche (God knowes) is but ſimple, yet I thought I could not any otherwiſe better beſtow & occupy the ſame, then ſo, as it were, to lay it with you in exchange & bauke, as by the grace of God to vtter vnto you ſome ſaying or ſentence, whereout you might receiue ſome piece of reliefe or comfort: for this vrie, and thoſe that haue any, ſo to occuppe their talents, as to viſite the afflicted, to comfort

fort the comfortlesse, and to bestow although as it were but one poore peny, to strengthen the pensiue in patience, euen as our Sauiour commended the deuout womans worke, for bestowing her oyle vppon him towarde his burial: So I doubt not but this taske which it hath pleased God nowe to set me, shall appeare vnto him a lawful and gaineful vsurie, a wel bestowed oyntment, and such a worke, that as it lacketh not his charge, so it shal not be either to you fruitlesse, either with him altogether thankelesse. Reioyce with them that reioyce (saieth the Apostle) and weepe with them that weepe. And the sonne of Sirach likewise, Let not them that weepe bee without comfort, but mourne with suche as mourne. Now (Sister) considering such and the like sayinges, calling to minde howe we haue reioyced togither, enioying the good dayes, that God of his goodnes hath heeretofore giuen vs, and nothing doubting, but he will driue away those stormy cloudes, and cause againe his cheerefull sunne to rise and shine vpon vs: and (that which I can not forget) what a mourner you were with me in the time of my mourning: verely now in the time of your distresse if my heauines woulde ease you, or my sorow might turne to your ioye,

Mat. 26. 10

Ro. 12. 15.

Eccle. 7. 34

I thinke my heart be not so hard, but that I
should bestowe some teares vppon you: al-
though that I forgeat mine owne portion in
the world to be none other but paines with-
out pleasure. Dauid we read lamented Sauls
death; although one that sought his blood.
And likewise Absolon that wicked child and
vnnatural sonne, with what a fatherly affec-
tion did he pity his case: crying whē he heard
the certaintie of his death, in such sort as is
expressed in ỳ 2. of Sam. 18. My sonne Abso-
lon, my sonne, my sonne Absolon, would God
I had died for thee: So verily ought our ca-
ses and calamities to be common, and I es-
pecially haue iust occasion to beare the bur-
then with you, being vnto me a true Sister,
a Sister by naturall nativitie, a Sister by
heauenlye regeneration, one with whom I
haue enioyed the sweete, and who with mee
hath not refused the sowre: wherefore as I
cannot but with brotherly affection bee sorie
for your sadnes, so when I some what lifte vp
mine eies toward heauen, & haue in conside-
ration the infinite mercies and marueilous
working of God our heauenly Father, con-
cerning his chosen children and sanctified
Saintes here on earth, then (me thinkes) I
receiue so plentifull ioy of spirite, and prou-
sion of

sion of patience against those stormes and tempestes of aduersities & afflictions, which I know I haue in the way of my pilgrimage to passe, and which I know by the course of Gods working abide certainly for all true & stedfast Christians, that in vttering the same vnto you it may be I shall giue you some occasion of comfort. God therefore I beseeche him guide my hand, and direct my heart, and so beholde you with his Fatherlye eye, and cheerefull countenance, that we may both receiue comfort of his holy spirit the true comforter, promised by our Sauiour, that wee may reioyce one with another, and both in the Lord.

Now there are diuers meanes that God hath ordeined & prouided for the cherishing and refreshing of heauy heartes and sorowfull soules: for some there are which are proper to the body, as earthly and temporall, other concerne the mind, as Ghostely and continual, which whereas they are to be had, neither of them are to be refused, forasmuch as God therein with our vse and commoditye, looketh to reape the fruite of his owne glorie. S. Paul alloweth Timothie and counceleth him for his weake stomakes sake moderately to drinke wyne: and Salomon likewise,

Comforts, some are temporal, some eternall.

Temporall comforts.

1. Tim. 5. 23.

Pro. 31. 6. wise, Giue the strong drink vnto him that is ready to perish, & wine vnto them that haue griefe of hearte. Concerning these, although they bee somewhat besides my care, yet this I may truely saye, that you haue to thanke God with a moste cheateful spirite, that hee hath not left you so destitute in this behalfe, as he hath thousands of other our brethren.

Meate and drinke, &c. How manie are there, not farre from you, if you list (as I thinke you do) to behold thē, and consider them with some comparison, in respect of whom you must needes confesse your selfe an happie handmaide of God: as whose hope is their comforte, patience their pleasure, their wine a cuppe of colde water, and whom for their apparel, necessitie allowe-eth no more then their bare naked skin: how manie poore Lazars are there that would be gladde to gather vp the crummes vnder that table where your hand is free without grudging? Yee saie peraduenture sometimes in your fit, I am a miserable woman: But what maie they saie, that haue neither cloth nor clout to defende them from the bitter biting cold: what may they saie, which many times haue neither bitte of bread, neither droppe of drinke, wherwith to satisfie the greedie worm of hunger, or to quenche the drie disease of thirst?

thirst: How many are there, which in compa-
rison of you, and mee although peraduenture
the leaste of xiiii., who beeing driuen to the
draffe of hogges, may saie with the prodigal
sonne, In howe farre better case are the hired
seruaunts of that house, then we seelie soules
are: doubtlesse hauing as we haue, although
wee did gette it hardlie, and buie it dearely,
yet should we be in farre better state then a
greate number, whiche by experience know
what the want of those necessaries are, which
God of his gratious goodnesse hath with a li-
berall hande, bestowed on vs his euill deser-
uing seruauntes: and who for anie thing to be
seene in our selues, deserue as euil and worse
then many of those needie naked souls, which
at sundrie times faint for want of foode, & as
the bare beastes stande open to all winde and
weather, subiect to all aduentures, free from
no aduersitie. Dauid well considered these
benefites of God, which we, because that we
haue not felt the lacke of them, make litle ac-
count of. God satisfieth saith hee, the thirstie
soule, and filleth the hungrie soule with good
things: and numbring diuers other the like
benefites, which Gods people dailie receiue
at his hande, hee crieth out twise or thrise
with earnest zeale, O that man woulde ac-
knowledge

Psa. 107. 9.

knowledge before the Lord his louing kindnesse, and his wondrous workes before the sonnes of men: Let vs likewise acknowledge the goodnesse of God towarde vs in this behalfe.

Kinsfolkes & friends.

And me thinkes (Sister) if these outwarde earthly thinges may any thing make in the matter, you haue iuste cause to reioyce. Dauid you know complaineth oftentimes that his familiars and kindred started from him in his aduersitie, for beside the multitude of his enimies, which as he maketh his account were more then haires vpō his head, he saith also, I am become a straunger vnto my brethren, euen an aliant vnto my mothers sons: In another place, he vttereth as a part of his griefe, that he was bereft of his Father and Mother: Concerning those poynces you are not so farre in as Dauid was: you haue brethren, you haue sisters, I know, that account your case their common case. That God hath visited our Father, I craue as greate parte of that plague as the best or the worst of you: that GOD hath so preserued our Mother, the myrrour of all mothers, therein you haue as great part as the best of vs. As for open enemies that seeke your hinderance, or that reioyce at your aduersity, I know none

Psal. 69. 8.

you

you haue: but you know your selfe a number of your friendes, that vnfainedly wyshe your prosperities.

Our Sauiour, you maye remember, complayned that the Foxes had holes where to couche them, and the birdes of the ayre haue their place of rest, but the Sonne of man had not where to hide his head. O that we could, that wee would, compare our selues in our aduersities with our Sauiour, the Sonne of man, the verye Sonne of God, of him to learne patience: then no doubt but by him we should receiue comfort. Consider therefore the goodnes of God, howe he hath prouided for vs by the gentlenes of our deere Mother, a place which we vse as an home and habitation, and that no Foxe hole, but thankes bee to God a warme & well feathered nest, where we haue free egresse and regresse.

A house or dwelling place.

This scripture was fulfilled in our Sauiour. They of a mans owne house are his enemies, and he therefore complaining saide, Hee that eateth bread with mee hath lifte vp his heele against mee: but thankes be vnto our heauenly Father, who hath ioyned our house in such an vnity, that we do not (as farre as I see) one disdaine the other in necessities and aduersities, neither enuie ech other in things

Concord of brethren.

succeeding

succeeding prosperously. God of his mercie graũt that band long to continue in ẏhouse of Sidmountaine, that it maie deserue the commendation of Ierusalem, euen to bee as a Citie which is at peace within it self. This was it whereof Dauid receiued much comfort, that after great diuisions, God had grãtes in his kingdome the peace and concorde of his people; so he saith of his experience, behold how good a thing it is, and howe comelie, for brethren to dwell euen together. Hee compareth it vnto the precious ointement powred on the head, that spreadeth abroad to the refreshing of the whole bodie, and vnto the dewe of Hermon, and that which falleth vppon the mountaines of Sion, places riche and fruitfull both with temporall benefits, & with the spirituall blessinges of God. This cheereful oyle and freshe dewe of vnitie and concord betwixt you, your brethren, sisters, and friendes, God hath blessed you withall: such dewe falleth not in all places, suche oile is not to be found in al houses, the fresh flower of vnitie and amity is not to be founde in euery fielde: but this as it groweth greene in the Garden of Sidmountaine, which if it fade, then farewell my part: but now flourishing as it doeth by the gratious goodnesse of God,

Psa. 122. 3.

A house or dwelling place.

Psa. 133. 1.

Concord of brethren.

of God, me thinke you should not but reioyce in the Lord, who hath reserued vnto you this piece of Paradise, that you may haue the fruition of that beautiful and sweet smelling flowre of concord. Thus I haue endeuoured some what to lead you into the consideration of the temporall benefites and blessings of God bestowed vpon you, whereout it may be you shall pick some piece of comfort, if things worldly and earthly, outward and temporal, may make any thing in this medicine. But it may be, that as to the sicke, things otherwise sweete become sowre & vnsauery, and to the weake and sickly stomake, the sweete honey is lothsome: so the mothe of pensiuenesse hath entered your hearte, that these weaker medicines may not haue their full force, and due operation.

Nowe after that you haue stoode on this place, to see and looke about you what comfort is to bee had on earth, where you maye well espye more then I haue shewed you: henceforth (Sister) let vs get vp on the mounting wyng of faythe, let vs rayse our selues vp through the cloudes, euen to the heauens, let vs come from the footestoole of God to his glorious seate, and that cannot be but comfortable vnto vs to consider. For S. Iohn (as he

Euerlasting and heauenly comforts

Reue. 4. 4.

(as he describeth his vision) when he saw the Maiestie of GOD sitting on his gloribus throne, declareth that the throne of God is compassed about with a rainbow, a sure seale and token of Gods mercie towardes vs, that although he often times rayne vppon vs, yet he will no more drowne vs. This hath euer been the chief comfort of the godly in al their distresses and afflictions, they al had an especiall eie this way. Read you the 121. Psa. the 123. Psalme, there to consider the practise of the Prophet, how he looked toward ẏ throne of God. I will lift myne eies to the Mountaines (saith he) from whence mine helpe shal come, mine helpe commeth from the Lorde which hath made heauen and earth, &c. I lift mine eies to thee that dwellest in the heauens: beholde, as the eyes of an handmayde marke the eyes of her mistresse, so our eyes wayte vpon the Lorde our God, vntil he haue mercie vpon vs. Nowe then (Sister) laying aside all earthly consideratiõs, if they will not worke with you, let vs looke vppon that helpe that commeth from heauen.

Euerlasting and heauenly comforts

This as I remember is one amongst the wise sayings of Salomon: Heauines casteth downe the heart of man, but a good woorde rayseth it vp agayne: If any mans woorde

Reue. 4. 4.

or wis-

or wisedome may any thing herein preuaile, then especially the good word of God, which as Dauid saith, is mightie in operation. It is so full of comfort, that if grace wanted not to vtter & receiue it accordingly, I nothing doubt but if you were halfe deade, it woulde soone quicken and set you vpright againe. So saith S. Paul, Whatsoeuer is written, is written for our learning, that wee through comfort and patience of the Scriptures, might haue hope. Seeing then the Lord hath left vs this heauenly treasure heere on earth, euen to our so great commoditie thereby to learne patience, and receiue comfort, let vs vse these as our spectacles to behold the mercies of GOD, which of our selues being nothing but blindnesse it selfe, are not able to search out or to see: and this shalbe as your diet, that you resort to those sweete running ryuers, springing vp vnto eternall life, counselling and aduising you heere to lay out the whole line of your life: no day, nor houre commeth amisse, but in the Scriptures you may find comfort: Yea, there ye shall meete with the fountaine of all comfort, the Spirite of God cheering and cherishing you after a heauenly and marueylous manner. Presently for my part, I chiefly commit your cause to his

God's worde.

Rom. 15. 4.

cure, and by his grace, I shall endeuour to giue you some taste of that precious liquour: God graunt it bee not marred for lacke of a better vessell.

Election in Christ.

First therefore, I am persuaded ỳ you nothing doubt of your adoption and election in Christ Iesus, that your name is entred in the booke of life, and that you are surely sealed vp for a saued sanctified soule. This foundation being laid on so sure a ground, hauing our hands fastened on this hold, what stormes or floods of affliction may there arise, but we may (considering the tender mercy of God towards his chosen children) endure with patience, ouercome with comfort, and wade thorow with ioy, knowing sure we shal haue a day, and seeing certainely although a farre off, the quiet and glorious hauen we haue to arriue at: It is a most comfortable saying which the Apostle vttereth vnto you: Wee knowe (saith he) that all things worke together for the best vnto them that loue GOD, euen to them that are called of his purpose. This one sentence so setting foorth the care that God your heauenly Father hath ouer you, might satisfie you, if you could weigh it as it is worthy.

Rom. 8. 28.

Great and manifolde were the miseries

which

which that chosen of God suffered: reade you there 1. of the 2. to the Corinthians. You shal finde there at what hard meate, & howe sowre sauce the Lord set that his painefull and faithfull seruaunt: as stripes, perilles both on Sea and land, cuill entreatie both of the Iewe and the Gentile, the deceit of false brethren, wearines, painefulnes, watching, hunger, thirst, colde, nakednesse, and al kind of persecution. Yet hee hauing that confidence and stedfast persuasion of the eternall prouidence of God, that he turneth all thinges to the commoditie of his elect, euen in the middest of these miseries, he shewed a most cheerefull spirite, as he saith, numbring many kindes of persecutions, in all these things we are more then conquerours, by him that loued vs. Paul. Rom. 8. 37.

In what distresse think you was that iust Ioseph, being endangered to perish in the pit, thrown in by the handes of his owne brethren, and afterwarde solde of them into a strange countrey, where also being taken of suspicion to haue abused his Maister Potiphars wife, was cast into prison: yet he also ouer these and the like temptations, became in time a conquerour, well perceiuing in the ende, that it was the Lordes doing to some good ende although hee did not straight vn-

Ioseph. Gen. 37. 24. Gen. 39. 20

derstand the same. And therefore besides his owne comfort, hee quieted also the troubled mindes of his brethren, declaring vnto them the prouidence of God, wherein he wholy depended. I am Ioseph your brother (saith he) whom ye solde into Egypt: now therefore be not sadde, nor grieued with your selues that ye solde me hither, for God did sende me hither for your preseruation: neither did hee so much attende the fact of his brethren, as the prouidence of God in the matter, so that hee seemeth in respect flatly to denie that they had done ought in the matter: as in these words, Now then you sent me not hither, but GOD who hath made me a Father vnto Pharao, and Lord ouer all his house, and ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. And by this meanes and considerations, God gaue him that he made the lesse accompt of the absence of his parentes, the ingratitude of his brethren, the lacke of his countrey, and also the slaunderous and vniust imprisonment.

Gen. 45. 4, 5.

Geu. 45. 8.

Likewise Dauid beeing in flight for the feare of his owne sonne Absolon, hearde, and bare with patience, railing Shimei, taking as it were his pleasure of him in his aduersitye, throwing stones at him as though hee accounted no more of him then of a vile dogge,

cursing

cursing and calling him murderer: & whereas Abishai his courage serued him to reuēge Dauids quarrell, & would haue set his head, if that he would haue but said the word: Beholde the humilitie, the patience of the Prophet, the comfort of a king, verely hee lifted vp his eyes to the hill, the holie hill of God, from whence he was assured al those things proceeded to some commoditie and furtherance of his: wherefore this was his answere to Abishai that sought reuengemēt, He curseth me, euen because the Lorde hath bidden him curse Dauid. This was the holde and handfast, that that princely Prophete tooke wherewith to stay himselfe, euer depending vpon the prouidence of his liuing God. Hee knewe that whatsoeuer befell him, God had a stroke in it, yea & further, beeing fully perswaded of the mercy of God, he knewe most assuredly those chastisementes and corrections should turne him to God, as hee maketh protestation in the 119. Psal. It is good for me that I haue been afflicted: so that beside his patience and comfort hee accompted it a gaine, and none of the smallest benefites of God, that he was so corrected at his iust and mercifull hand. Dauid.

You may also consider the example of pati-

ent Iob: How he waded through his temptations, as who knowing that all those hils of miserie, fell vppon him, no otherwise then by the determinat apppointment of the most highest, with the consideration thereof he refreshed himself, after that al worldly succors and comfortes were taken from hym, and so became a conquerour ouer all the greeuous assaultes of Satan, as who, hee was assured could go no further than he had his limietes appointed and assigned vnto hym, by the iust ruling and mercifull disposing hand of the euer liuing God: wherfore he made it no matter of misfortune (as we commonly do in the like cases) that his cattell were made a pray for his enemies, that his sonnes & daughters had that straunge ende, the house falling on their heads: but by such his words he openly sheweth the inward cõfort of his heart. The Lord hath giuen (saith he) the Lord hath taken away, as it pleased the Lord so is it come to passe, blessed be ỹ name of the Lord: & by this we vnderstand that he had not so muche regard of his enemies the Caldeans and the Sabeans, whom hee knewe to bee but the instrumentes of the Diuell the chiefe woorkeyman, but alwayes had his eye stedfastly bent vpon God his Creator and Redeemer, without

out whose ordinaunce and appointment, neither of them could haue any whit mooued or preuailed against him, no more then the senselesse winde hadde power of it selfe, so to ouerthrowe the house vpon his children. And for as much as he was the seruant of God, he assured hym selfe, that Satan with his slaues coulde not doe or intende him so muche hurt, but his Lorde and God woulde euen by the same means turne it to his great furtherãce and commoditye, as wee are giuen to vnderstande in the end of the history that God did in deed perfourme the same: So that by this hee became so humble and patient, so stedfast in hope, that he said, that if the Lordes pleasure were to kil him, to take his life frõ him, yet would he not let goe his holde, giue ouer his hope, or blaspheme the name of God, to the which he was marueilously prouoked.

Behold likewise the behauiour & courage of those three noble yong men whom Nabuchodonozor threatned the terrible fire, for that they refused to worship his golden God: see howe they take holde on the mercie, and prouident care of God their Lord. For thus they aunswered the King: Beholde, our God whom we serue is able to deliuer vs from the hot firie fornace, & hee will deliuer vs out of

Three children in the fornace.

thine hand (O King.) But if not, be it knowen to thee (O King) that we will not serue thy gods, nor do worshippe to thy golden Image, which thou hast set vp: and according to that their cōstant hope and faith, the Lord faileth not, as you know, marueilously to deliuer them.

Daniel. Dan. 6. 16. &c.

And what other comfort had their fellow Daniel being enclosed to be deuoured of the Lions in the Denne: according to whose hope, likewise the Lorde sent his Angell to shut and mouzle vp the Lyons mouthes, sauing him harmlesse. The Scripture yeldeth plentifull store of the like examples and sayings, whereout if we stand to consider them, we haue inough so to arme vs against al aduentures, that no tribulatiō, no anguish may bee so extreme, but that by patience we may ouercome them, and calamities so great or grieuous, but that they are to bee conquered by comfort of the Scriptures. So saieth the Apostle, God is faithful which wil not suffer you to bee tempted aboue your power, but will euen giue the issue with the temptations, that you may bee able to beare them: where he so cōforteth the afflicted among the Corinthians, and doth strengthen them vnder the crosse, leading them no farther then

1. Cor. 10. 13.

into

into the consideration of Gods eternall pro-
uidence, whiche maketh the sharpe and the
sowre, softe and sweete in the ende, although
no maner of chastisement (as he saith) is ioy- Heb. 12. 11
ous for the present time. I haue in those for-
mer examples according to my simplicitie,
sent you some of the righteous and tried ser-
uantes of God, to stande you in steed of Apo-
thecaries and Surgeons, of whom you may
learn to cure your wound without douting,
forasmuche as they minister you euen suche
soueraigne medicines, as they them selues
haue tasted and tried (as you see) to their end-
lesse comfort: but yet the chief physition is to
come, Christ Iesus (I meane) the salue of all Christ.
our sores, the patterne of all patience, & most
assured comfort of all sorowing soules, and
readie redresse in all aduersities. You haue
seene in the examples afore, the experience of
good souldiours fighting a good fight, and
how they haue quitte themselues against the
temptations of the worlde, and the assaultes
of Satan: Nowe turne your eyes towarde
Christ our redeemer the great Captaine, and
most renowmed conquerour of all that euer
tasted these worldly infirmities, whose euill
entreatie and hard handling the time serueth
not now to describe vnto you, but I send you

to the

to the head spring, the history of the Gospel: you may also at your leasure reade that mine exercise concerning the loue of God, where I haue assayed to say somewhat to this purpose. Onely nowe I giue you S. Paules exhortatiō, Let the same mind be in you which was euen in Christe Jesus, who beeing the Sonne of God, and very God, one with hys Father, made himselfe of no reputation, took on him the forme of a seruāt, he humbled himselfe and became obedient vnto the death, euē to the death of the crosse. Here learne of your Sauiour, patience and humilitie, and marke where lay his comfort, verely that way that other hys saued soules haue sought, euen the prouidence of his God, and by him our God: his Father, & (thanks be to him) our Father: for so he saide when that lost childe went out from hym, and his other Disciples, to worke his purposed treason. Verely (saith he) it goeth with the sonne of man, as it is written of him: and at this marke hee seemed to ayme, when as Pilate vaunted himselfe and triumphed ouer him, saying, that hee had power to crucifie him, and likewise to loose him: then our Sauiours answere was, thou couldest haue no power against me, except it were giuen thee from aboue. So when hee did with

*This is since imprinted and called, The view of the estate of man, &c.*

Philip. 2. 5. 6. 7. 8.

deep

deep consideratiõ as it were aforehand, taste the bitternesse of this cup, this way he founde out of his temptatiõ, saying to his father, thy will be fulfilled and not myne: this was hys comfort in the extremities of the crosse, and his flesh also rested in this hope, that ỳ Lorde woulde not suffer his holy one to see corruption. By these you may bee sufficiently stored with diuers kindes of medicines, you haue both the gentle and the strong working before you. Act. 2. 26. 27.

4.

The nexte care concerneth the vse heereof, that they bee applied and placed to the sore. Now therefore if you will set these glasses of the afflicted seruants of God, and especiallie Christe crucified before your eyes, I doubte not but that it shall quicken all the dead flesh that lyeth about your hearte. For first if you wil compare quantitie with quantitie, surely yours may seeme but an Aprill showre in cõparison of these blooddie floods and Seas of sorowes that passed ouer theyr heads. But make your case comparable with others the aforesaid (as peraduenture it is more then I am aware of) yet being grounded on Christe Iesus with stedfast faith, hauing your election certaine by your honest conuersation in the workes of light, and the Spirit of adopti-

The applying of the former examples.

on

en bearing witnes with your spirite that you are a chosen childe of God, hauing in iust consideration the iust dealing and mercifull prouidence of God towardes his vessels prepared to honour, although in your selfe you bee humbled (as necessary it is) yet in God you cannot but reioyce and glory with his seruants and Saintes on the earth. Were it so that men reuiled you as Shimei did Dauid, why should you not content & quiet your selfe as Dauid did, saying, The Lorde hath sent him for this purpose: yea, whatsoeuer kind of crosse it shall please God to visite vs withall, we ought by this example to cõsider the good purpose of God therein, and to say, It is good for vs that we tast of some trouble, least wee be found for bastarde children (as the Apostle speaketh.) If you had susteined losse of frieds parents, childrẽ, or husbands, standing at one staye with Iob, then for your comforte you haue to say, The Lord hath giuen, the Lorde hath taken away. Let the case bee (I am sure it is not so ill) that you were pestered wyth Iobs miserable disease, as wee are all in the hands of God, vpon vs to worke his will, and there is neither of both vndoutedly, but haue deserued far worse then iust Iob: yet he hath prouided for vs before hande a staffe to staye on,

Hebr. 12. 8.

ment; and hath giuen vs a lesson of patience in that answere which he made his wife, prouoking him to yeeld to the assault of Satan, and to blaspheme his God: Thou speakest like a foolish woman (saieth he) shall wee receiue good at the hande of God, & not receiue euill? If you had lost your countrie, which now you enioy by the benefite of God, might you not well conceiue with your selfe of the will and worke of God therein, to some such purpose as hee wrought by Iosephs sale and banishment? whersoeuer you shall come, whatsoeuer entertainement or entreatie you should find, would you not say as he did, It is God that hath sent me hither? Suppose you were in the pit with Ioseph, in the den with Daniel, or that you made vp the messe with those three appointed to the fyre, Sidrach, Misach, and Abednego: would yee mistrust euen specially if they haue made the way before you, but that God would prouide some issue for you in the middest of these temptations, either to saue you harmeles by a mightie deliuerance, or els as it should be best for you to make you a conqueror by patience?

And to come to Christ that fountaine of all consolation for all Christians: O Sister, we neuer felt with our little finger that fyre wherein

Christs torments and afflictions.

wherein he was consumed for our sinnes: we haue not tasted with the typ of our tongue, that bitter cuppe, wherein he swalloweth up death due vnto vs for our offences: we scope in whole skinnes, his handes, his feete, his sides were pearced of mercilesse murderers: we for the most part haue ease and rest, hee found no place on earth wher to rest his head: we thinke much if we be somewhat diseased with a little paine or griefe of body, hee sweat and shedde bloodie water to ease vs, and release vs of perpetuall paines. Nowe then (Sister) thrust in your fingers with Thomas the Apostle, and feele with faith the bloudie woundes of your sauiour and redeemer: and these being considered, what are our greatest griefes, but fleabites in comparison, besides that inwarde anguish and passion of the soule, far passing his outwarde apparent pangues, whereby hee felt the seuere iudgement and wrath of GOD, the rewarde of our euill deserts? Come you hither (Sister) with your heauie burthen and hee refresh you, for here is the well and the water of life, receiue you heere the most comfortable aqua vitæ, stilling downe from the crosse of our redeemer and peacemaker Christ Iesus the righteous. God hath layde vpon you some kinde

of

of crosse, but none such as his owne Sonne your Sauiour hath borne before you. GOD hath thought good for some purpose appertaining to his glory, to put you to some paines: O why should you or any of vs grudge to take on vs the yoke of God? hee hath not spared his deare and onely Sonne, to make him a man, a seruant, a sacrifice for our soules redemption, which were once solde vnder sinne, the slaues of Satan. But were it (happie were you if it were so in deede) that you had to pledge your sauiour where he hath begun vnto you, if that you hong on the crosse together with him, had you not then comfort ynough by you: coulde you not well content your selfe to be baptized with his baptisme, whose handmaid, I know you will not denie your selfe to be: is it not ynough for the seruant to be serued as his master: were you in the place of the penitent theefe, craning his pardon as he did hang together with our sauiour, would you haue despaired, would you haue mistrusted, might you bee comfortlesse, would ye not reioyce?

But you will say he had his Sauiour present before his eies. But, O you of litle faith, if you haue not as good assurãce of mercy as he: do you not consider that by the iudgemẽt

of

of our Iudge, they are most blessed which beleeue & see not: But he happy man heard those ioyfull words at his redeemers mouth, To day thou shalt bee with mee in paradise. And is that sufficient? why then haue not you as sure an oblation, the warrant of his word, his testament sealed with his most precious bloude: or els are you left out of that will? Doth hee not say vnto you as directly as to any other, Come vnto mee and I shall refresh you? Doth he not say vnto you, Aske and haue, seeke and finde, knocke and it shall be opened? are you not assured of that absolution in the day of the Lorde his appearance, Thy faith hath saued thee, goe thy way in peace? are you not to bee numbred among them to whom it shalbe saide, Come yee blessed of my father? when that Christ saith vnto you, He that beleeueth hath euerlasting life: when that he saith, I bring the water of life, I am the bread of life, I am the vine, you are the branches: I am the good shepherde, the true Messias, the redeemer of the world, the physition of the sicke, comming to saue that which is lost: in al these can you not pick out that promise to bee with him in paradise? I dare not doubt (Sister) that you are to seeke concerning these thinges, you haue (I no-

II.

VVarrants out of the scriptures for our comfort.

Mar. 7. 29.

Iohn 3. 16.

thing

thing mistrust) laide the foundation of your faith on Christ the right rocke of saluation: then can you no more doubte, then if you had the possession of paradise alreadie, euen as it was prepared for you from the beginning, seing that he made the graunt, that hath the whole matter in his handes, and in whome there is no guile. Stand therefore, stand stiffe and fall not, let not go this handfast, which if you doe, no winde or weather may rise in the worlde that shall any whit moue you or your so sure building, standing on so good a grouid and so sound a rocke. S. Iohn in his first Epi- 1. Iohn. 1. 4
stle setting Christ Iesus before thē to whom he writeth, This we write vnto you (saith he) that your ioy might be full. Verely (Sister) if wee coulde fully consider Christ with his mercie and merites, our heartes might not but be filled vp full with ioy: for there is nothing so sowre, but in Christ it becometh sweete and sauorie, there is no want of any earthly thing, but Christ supplieth with a greater measure. The braunches that abide in that vine, no weather may make them to wither: and although they seeme for a season much like to the naturall vine, to be as drie and rotten stickes, such as men would scarce gather vp in the way, yet the heauenly hus-

husbandman so cherisheth & tendereth them, that in time which he knoweth to be most conuenient, euen then they shall shewe themselues in their kinde, and freshly flourishe in their fruites, when all other flowers are faded, and other trees which are not planted by him may not longer stand for their rotten rootes.

Answeres to certaine obiections concerning the want of things.

Let vs therefore stand a litle and see what more comfort we may sucke out of that fresh and fruitfull vine, so shall our hearts receiue ioye, and our ioye shall be full. You haue no landes, nor liuings (I thinke) in deede any thing superfluous, but yet competent, and if you were much more needie, euen vtterlie destitute, yet you haue not to take great thought for the matter, seeing Christ telleth you, you shall haue life euerlasting, paradise is your inheritance, his owne kingdome is your possession.

Companie.

Companie in deede is comfortable: but be it that you were bereste of the companie and comfort of your brethren and sisters, yet the true Christian cannot be solitary. S. Iohn saith, If we walke in the light as he walked, we haue fellowship with him. And hee himselfe saieth, he will not leaue vs comfortlesse or solitarie, yea he wilbe present with vs vnto the worlds end, that is, with all his, at al

1. Iohn. 1. 7

times

times sending vs the Comforter his holy spirite. If we doe that which he commandeth vs, then hee accompteth vs his friendes, his brethren, his sisters, and that which is chiefest, because it is endlesse, after we haue run out our course, we shalbe with him in Paradise, making continually that prayer for vs vnto his Father, which hee began heere on earth, Father I will that they which thou hast giuen me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glorie.

Beholde, you shall beholde the glorie of Christ: what then will you take thought for any piece of worldly estimation? All the glorie of man (saith the Prophet) is as the flower of the fielde, soone ripe, soone rotten, but ỹ crowne of glorie, which you shall receiue by Christ, is incorruptible, once founde neuer lost: once ripe, neuer rotten: what neede you passe vppon the wicked earthly Mammon, whereas you be most assured of that treasure layed vp for your store in heauen, euen Christ Iesus the riches of the rich, and high God of heauen? VVorldly estimation.

It would be a comfort for you peraduenture, to haue an head and husband to defend you, & in whom you might delite as in your owne soule, by whom you might haue the increase Mariage.

creasse of Godly children, vnto many in deede the verye blessing of God: but in this also you must submitte your selfe to the mightie hand of God, knowing that hee worketh diuerse wayes in diuerse vessels, and those ordained to honour, for to some mariage is expedient, to some it bringeth ioy and gladnes: but contrarily in many you may see it is a snare of the worlde, a stumbling blocke, and plaine diuorcement betwixt God and them. And this inconuenience I knowe commeth not of marriage it selfe, as the proper & principall cause, which God hath ordeined as holy and comfortable: but by their abuse, and for their iust plague. Whereas some sucke hony, some other meete with gall, and venyme: and yet the flower beautifull enough, and goodly to the eye. Wherefore God of his high wisedome, knowing much better what is good for vs then we of our selues, doth at sundrie times cut vs short from the fruition of many his good creatures, benefites and ordinances, least by abuse we should in maner turne the nature of them to our owne hinderance and confusion, so that it may be better for vs to lack them then to haue them. Diuerse I thinke there be good men, and honest maydens, which peraduenture would be

hard

hard husbandes, and shrewd wiues: neither would it be any strange case to see, that some beare the first yoke honestly and godly, which at the second matche ouer rule & weary their yoke fellowes, causing them with repentance to wish their former libertie againe. Such is the diuerse working of God, that in some he is better pleased with marriage, and other he holdeth in single life as most expedient for them.

Some againe he blesseth withe the fruite of children, other he maketh baren and fruitlesse, yet both for the better, both seruing to the glory of God, and commoditie of his chosen. Looke on the comparison made by Solomon, the 4. of the booke of wisdome: he saith, that barrennes is better with vertue, then to haue a multitude of children. Neither doe I write this as one that despaireth of your prosperitie this way: I know you haue had good offers, which by iudgement of manne, might haue been conuenient for you to haue followed, but I haue tolde you the worse, and yet nothing douting but that the best is to come. Anna you may remember mentioned in the first of Sam. 1. the wife of Elkanah, the happie handmaid of God, how he exercised her a long time in patience with the shame of barrennes,

Barrennesse

Anna.

rennes, as it was counted in those daies. But the Lorde when hee hadde brought her lowe ynough, then he rayled her againe, hearde her humble petition, and gaue her for her comfort that iuste Iudge her sonne Samuel, hys true seruaunt. In the historie of Tobias, we reade in what distresse that humble mayden Sara was, whom it pleased God to visite, and chastise her with seuen husbandes, so that she became a reproche vnto her owne Fathers maydes, laying to her charge that shee hadde strangled her husbandes. Thinke you (Sister) your case is comparable to this? If it be so, then take that remedy which she vsed, and mistruste not of the successe that followed, as you haue in the exãple of Anna. So she made her prayer to God the Almightie, whiche is expressed in the historie, desiring him to pitie her case, and by some meanes to take awaye her reproche: and accordingly the Lorde (as his eares are alwayes open to the prayers that proceede from an humble spirite) gaue her to wife to good Tobias, with whom shee sawe many a good day, and also for token of Gods blessing, issue of children. Euen so if we may hope for the best (and why shoulde you mistruste the matter, seeing that Abraham in a more desperate case, hoped against hope:)

Tob. 3. 10.

Sara.

Abraham.

the

the Lorde our God I doubt not, pitieth your case so farre, that hee will sende you a trustie Tobias, to whom you may betake your selfe wythout feare, with whom you may leade out your life in peace and comfortable quietnesse, by whom you may conceiue and beare some such sonne as is reported of Samuel, in whome you may reioyce as in an obediente sonne, and in whom God may be glorified as his seruant. But if the example of Anna, and Sara, do not so much moue you, if it bee out of your hope to haue their good hap, let vs their returne againe to Christ our sweet Sauiour & rightuous redeemer, at whose hande, when all other aides doe faile, wee may bee bold to fetch comfort, and that most plentifully.

If Tobias come not, yet you may wel content your selfe with Christe, finding that in him you shal be sped as fully as you can wish. You are of the flocke of the faithfull: then will he stande you to all purposes in steede of an husband, not after an earthly, but after an heauenly sort. He is the head to defende and gouerne that bodie, whereof you are a member. Suche as the husbande is to the wife, such is Christ to those that are of the christian congregation, as S. Paul hath made comparison. It is a great comfort in deede for

An excellēt comparison betweene the profite, & comfort that the wife may haue of her husband, & the same we haue of our head & husbande Christ.

Adam to haue his Eue, and contrariwise: but Christ it is, that blessed seede, that hath blessed them both. There is a narrow bonde and copulation betwixt the wife & her husbande, for they are reckoned one in flesh: Euen so hath Christe, to make vs vnto hym an holie spouse, taken bone of our bones, and flesh of our flesh. Your husbande would cleaue vnto you when your other friendes would forsake you, and Christ will accompanie and assist you when your husband hath left you. He must sometimes of necessitie bee absent from you, death shall make a greeuous diuorcement betwixte you: but no time may tye Christ from you: by him it is that you liue, & that you liue well, hee shall assist you at your dying day, and at the latter day he shall raise you againe. Your husbande peraduenture, would thinke no money, no meate, no apparrel too deare for you, and so doing, you would thynke him a good husbande: but whether he woulde die for you I doubt. But Christ Iesus that good shepheard hath shewed you so much loue, that hee hath laide downe his life for you, he hath shed his blood for you, he died euen the death of the crosse, hee dyed for your sinnes, and rose againe for your iustification, and now maketh intercession for you, whiche

he

he will continue vntill the time he haue placed you in his kingdome to reigne with hym for euer.

Thus (Sister) as my simplicitie serueth mee, I haue attempted that, which I feare I haue not obteined, (if it might be) to comfort you, or rather too tell you where you may seeke and finde comforte, then of my selfe to make you any deede of gift: For God is called the authour of all consolation, therefore I referre you to him by your prayer, and by resort vnto his worde, written for all our comfortes. I haue but somewhat assayed to play Iohn Baptistes parte, I am not he of whom you muste receiue this good gifte, but you must looke towarde another: Therefore I say vnto you of him whose shoelatchet I am not worthye to vnloose, Behold the Lamb of God who bringeth this comfort with him, a salue (mee thinkes) sufficient to heale all sores, as that hee is that Lambe that taketh away the sinnes of the worlde. Nature hath so prouided that if we receiue any wounde in the head, the whelke that is in the hande, the corne that is in the foot, we soone forget and loose the sense thereof. O consider (Sister) howe your head was wounded, then shall your handes and your feete the lesse grieue you:

you: Now againe our head is whole, triumphing in heauen: why then should our hearts be heauie on earth, as though the head hadde forgotten the bodie, or any part thereof: No (Sister) doubte you not, hee will not suffer an hayre to perishe of that bodie whiche he so dearely purchased, seeyng that this mightie Michael hath subdued our arch enemie, that
Reuel. 12. terrible dragon, and subtill serpent with his petie captaines, death and hell, what shoulde wee bee so much moued with any force of the fleshe, or any mischicke that the worlde may worke vs: Yea, heere also our Sauiour speaketh cõfortably vnto you, saying, Be of good cheere, I haue ouercome the world. Seeing that hee hath broken the head of our enemie, what should his tail so much trouble vs: seeing hee hath taken away our sinnes, what should any sorowes remain amongst vs: and if wee sorowe not for our sinnes, why doe we lament for any other earthly trifle: So (Sister) if your eye be fully fixed on Christe your redeemer, seeing his paines and his patience, you may not but quiet your self, considering his merites and his mercy, you can nothing mistrust but hee that tooke away the greater burthen of your sinnes, will also open you a waye out of your sorowes, so that nowe you

haue

haue no occasion left of mistrust in the goodnesse of God. For that he gaue vs his sonne, howe shoulde hee not with him giue vs all thinges also: and now your ioy must needes bee full, as S. Iohn saieth. Say not then you are in miserie, for you see present remedie hauing good assurance of eternall felicitie. And if a mā should aske you howe you proue your state to bee miserable, I am sure you can not proue so fast as I can disproue. Rom. 8. 32.

N.

You wil say, I am an abiect in the world: I answere, the more meeter for God, the liker you are to your Sauiour: so saith the Apostle to your cōfort & mine, The vile things of the worlds, thinges despised and thinges of nought, hath God chosen. Comfortes against the cotempt of the worlde and sorrow & heauines 1. Cor. 12.

I am sad and pensiue, (you will say) my meate doeth mee no good, I enioye not the worlde. But these are no arguments, hereby to conclude miseries. For euen the holy and happie Dauid had suche sugar & sauce to his meate, hee mingled his bread with ashes, and where was most likelihood of rest, his bedde he watred with teares, so that of your sorow it self you may receiue comfort, because that short worldly sorowes are but a passage vnto vnspeakeable, incredible, and eternall ioye and consolation. Our Sauiour saith they are

happie

happie that lament, for they shall bee comfor-
ted, but hee setteth a woe vppon those that
laughe: so that by his iudgement happinesse
(and heauenly happinesse he speaketh of) cō-
meth rather by lamentinge then laughyng.
Reue.21. Yea: God himself will take ỹ paines to wipe
away the teares of the eies of such as sheade
any vnder the crosse, & especially in the cause
of his Christe. You haue a little comfort per-
aduenture in the worlde, yet I am sure more
than Lazarus in his penurie, or Iob in his
perpleritie: and the lesse you finde on earth,
the more belike you shal haue in heauen. You
knowe the answere to the rich manne, in the
parable, that hee had his earthly pleasure for
Luc.16.25 his portiō. But what an exchange made La-
zarus? euen eternal pleasure for temporal pe-
nurie. If you haue not your portion with the
rich manne heere, you may the lesse doubte to
haue parte and place with Lazarus in the
kingdome of God. And heere let Christe bee
your comforter. You shall lament (saith he)
but the worlde shall reioyce, and in him, (hee
saith) you shall haue peace. O see that pitifull
and sauing Samaritan, how he powreth wine
and oyle into your woundes, euen the peace
of conscience, the peace of God that passeth al
Ioh.15.18. vnderstanding. If the worlde hate you (saith

(hee

he) you know that it hated me before you: & if our sauiour hath leade vs the way, what should we sticke at the matter? where as he hath ouerlept so great blockes, why should we stumble so at euery strawe which the deuill casteth in our way? The Apostle saieth, If we suffer with him, we shall reigne with him: and if wee die with him, we shall liue with him. O Sister, let vs not shrinke from our Captaine, whom we see alreadie to bee a conquerour. Let vs prepare our selues patiently to abide the pleasure of God: let vs exercise patience in the lighter, that we may the better beare the greater burden. Let vs liue and die with our Sauiour, let vs suffer with him in all patience, that we may reigne with him in glorie, to the which the afflictiõs of this world with all extremitie (as S. Paule hath cast the matter) are nothing comparable. We hope to haue our part in the kingdome of Christ Iesus, let vs not then looke for it there where hee hath tolde vs it is not to be founde. Let vs not seeke after worldly wealth or earthly felicitie, let vs not looke heere to rule the roste, but to be rosted rather of Rulers. Our kingdome is where Christ reigneth, let that content vs, knowing that his kingdome is aboue all powers, al things

2. Tim. 2. 11. 12.

being

being in subiection vnder his feete.

Here I leaue you (Sister) betaking you to Christ, who couereth you as one of his chosen chickens, vnder the shadow of his cõfortable winges, against whom as long as you liue, neither the world, which he hath cõquered: neither death, which hee hath swallowed vp: neither the gates of hell, which he hath closed vnto you, shal any thing preuaile. That which I haue said, I haue said once, & peraduenture as good vnsaid: but Christ continually comforteth you with his sweete promises and euerlasting word of saluation: hee still crieth vnto you, Bee of good cheere, I haue ouercome the worlde: reioyce in this (saieth he) that your name is written in the booke of life. Betake you therefore wholy to him, reioice in his crosse, resort to his word, whence, as out of paradise you may gather flowers sufficient to fill you with ioye. And if it hath pleased almightie God any thing to refresh you with this my poore posy, his will be done, his name be glorified, Amen. I haue my reward: and hee the God of all consolation graunt vs the heauenly comfort of his holy Spirit, that peace which the world can not giue, and that constant patience in all his fatherly corrections, that we bee not found

falle

false hirelings, but true and trustie seruants: no bastard children, but by vnfained faith, the blessed posteritie of the blessed Abraham, and true regenerates of God by our Sauiour Christ. And the holie sanctifying Spirit of truth, and God be blessed for euer, Amen.

# A verie godly and learned Exhortation to suffer patiently imprisonment, exile, or what miserie soeuer els may happen to a man in this life for the profession of the Gospel of Christ Iesus.

IF the worlde hate you, good Brethren, and thereupon with sundrie afflictions and griefes doe molest and vexe you, marueile not with grudging, but praise God with patience, who in this fornace fashioneth you to the likenesse and image of his owne Sonne, whom the worlde hath hated from the beginning, for whose sake also in no wise it can loue you, but with most spitefull hate will pursue you, euen vnto the death, Iohn. 15.

death, for that you are chosen by Christ from
Rom.6. the worlde, to walke forth and bring out
fruite, which shall continue to sanctification,
whereof the ende shalbe euerlasting life. For
℣. as a rich and beautifull Harlot full of amo-
rouse filth, with a painted face, wantō looks,
trimme araye, faire words, large promises,
great giftes, & with the entisement of quiet,
wealthie and pleasant life, allureth them on
whom she casteth loue (yet at the end rewar-
deth them with pockes, piles, fighting, braw-
ling, and most shamefull death) whom if shee
can by no meanes entise to follow her fancie,
she hateth so deadly, that she ceaseth not, but
causeth the whole rablement of her bawdie
bawdes, ruffling roysterkins with brawling
bragges, shamefull slaunders, subtill sur-
mises, quarrelling questions, and fally fained
accusations, to vexe, trouble and bring to de-
struction: So the Princesse of the world, that
most filthie harlot wooeth Gods children, es-
poused vnto his sonne Christ, to breake their
faith and trouth to him plighted, and to be-
come her dearlings, setting before their eyes
all the kingdomes of the worlde and the glo-
rie thereof, promising with holowe holines,
subtill suspicion, falsely fained religion, and
a pokefull of such prettie perswasions, that if
they

they wil fall downe and worſhip as ſhe doth, ſhee will giue vnto them all theſe ſame: for then ſhal they be her owne deare dearlings, and ſhe will loue them, as her owne: but the end ſhalbe moſt dreadful damnation. Whom if ſhe cannot perſwade, neither by one way or by other vnto her loue, from Chriſt their beſt and onely beloued ſpouſe, ſhee conceiueth ſo great an hatred againſt them, that ſhee ſtirreth all her champions with might & maine to doe them diſpleaſure in their goods, to worke them hatred of their friendes, to impaire their good name, to puniſhe their bodies, to offende their conſciences, to make theyr lyfe yrkſome vnto them, and moſt cruelly without mercy to kill them, yet whoſe death is moſt precious in Gods ſight, and hath to rewarde a moſt glorious reſurrection. Thus the worlde hath ſerued our deare and beſt beloued Chriſte before vs, for our ſakes, who was giuen into the hands of this harlot to be thus cruelly dealt withall, for to be vnto vs a pattern, which we ſhould folow, an image, after which we muſt be faſhioned, painted foorth before our eyes in the Scriptures, to teach vs to followe his trace wyth patience, & in running this race to conceiue comfort, hoping after victorie through fayth

Ioh. 15.

1. Pet. 2.

Rom. 8.

Rom. 15. in him, who both gaue vs warning of the paine, and leſt we ſhould faint, to comfort vs, promiſed victorie, ſaying, In the world ſhall you haue affliction, but in me peace: bee of good chere, for I haue ouercommed the worlde. To fyght with a puiſſant enemie, whoſe courage was neuer abated, whoſe ſtrength is inuincible, and who hath bene oftentimes aſſailed by many, but neuer vanquiſhed, might diſcomfort a weake heart, and cauſe it to giue ouer at the firſt without further reſiſtance: But for ſo much as this ſterne madame with al her chiualrie and force is ſo ouercome, and weakened to our handes that ſhe is not able to reſiſt, what countenance ſo euer ſhe makes, much leſſe able to ouercome ſuch as do ſtoutly withſtande her malice and crueltie, howe faint harted & cowardly milkſoppes may we bee iudged, that will be abaſhed, and may not abide the lowring countenance of a feeble, maimed, & beaten braggger, eſpecially ſeeing that in ſtriuing faithfully againſt her and her ſouldiours, the loſſe of renowme heere is the purchaſing of eternall glorie, the loſſe of worldly goodes, the gayning of heauenly riches, the loſſe of a miſerable and ſhort life heere, the winning and very entrance into a ioyfull and euerla-

1 Ioh. 16.

ſting

ting life in heauen: Is the friendshippe of the worlde so deare to vs, that therefore we shoulde not esteeme Gods fauour: Ought our goods, wife, children, friends, lands and possessions so much to be regarded, that for to saue them we should forsake the heauenly riches and euerlasting inheritance: Ought we to bee so desirous to liue heere, that for a short life and vnpleasant, we wil purchase an euerlasting and most painefull death: But the burthen of pouertie is importable, hunger, imprisonment, exile is intolerable, the bitter stormes of persecution, and the sharpe showres of death are so insufferable, that we feare lest wee shoulde not be of power to abide and passe thorow them, and therefore do thinke it better to sit still then to rise & take a fall, better not to enterprise the conflict, then in the middes for lacke of strength through faintnes to giue ouer with shame, and runne away. How delicate, fearefull, and therefore vnwilling the flesh is to suffer, common experience teacheth, all men hauing any feeling of themselues perceiue, and chiefely they, who setting all persuasions of the flesh apart, haue of full purpose and resolute determination with themselues, entred into the schoole of sufferance, beginning at Christe

his crosse, and so forth to learne therein only to glory, came by that they feele in themselues best declare. For as the deadly foe to mankinde assaulted our deare brother Iesus Christe then most hotly, after hee perceiued by plaine tokens that he was Gods Sonne, bent, by the crosse and contempt of the world to enter into glory, with the firie darts of famine, pouerty, ignominy, shame, & afterward with ỳ feare of death: on the other part, with plentie, riches, honour, possessions, and glory of the whole worlde, knowing most perfectly ỳ these perswasions should be most strong to moue & perswade the flesh to refuse the crosse weying ỳ paines & the trauaile with one eye, & the pleasant wealthie honour with ỳ other: so he ceasseth not to assaile Christes mẽbers with the selfesame entisements, to cause the flesh to abhorre the crosse, and seeke after ease, but then most busily when he perceiueth the hearte mooued by Gods Spirite to contemne these as vanities, & to seeke after true wealth, quietnes and glory. And without all doubt the mistrust in Gods prouidẽce wherwith all flesh is naturally infected, and feare of the great painfull bitternesse, that hunger, imprisonmente, and persecution bryngeth, alwayes obiected and propounded by the de-

Math. 4.

licate

licate fleſhe, doeth moue the hearte of man to hate and flie by al waies the croſſe, and to inuent and pretende excuſes and cauſes which it ſhould be better to refuſe, then to enter into trouble, among which this is not ẏ leaſt, that the fleſh, not regarding Gods working in the midſt of affliction, far aboue the capacitie of mans witte, pretendeth as though it woulde gladly for truthes ſake enterpriſe great matter, but that it hath not power giuen, able to go thorow withall accordingly. And this excuſe is pretẽded euen by thẽ, that yet wil not ſeem to be fleſhly, but ſpiritual, not flattering ẏ world for feare, but fauouring the truth of loue, & ſo deceiue them ſelues where they vterly forſake & refuſe that thing they woulde ſeeme moſt gladly to obtaine. Wherein they cõmit double offence: of hypocriſie, whẽ they would ſeeme to be that they are not: and of incredulitie, for that they declare plainely in this ſaying, that they thinke either that God can not, or els that he wil not comfort, ſtrẽgthen, and deliuer them foorth of all miſeries, not eſteeming his promiſes, wherein he hath declared his will, neither marking his wonderous worke for his children from time to time in their afflictions, wherein his power moſte manifeſtlie appeareth, neither yet

considering his fatherly care, whiche is more mindefull and tender ouer his, then the mother can bee ouer her onely beloued childe. It sufficeth betwixt man & man, specially if they be of honestie & credite, that things passe by worde & writing: we persuade our selues, that the thyng so promised and confirmed ought and also shalbe performed. Upon this persuasion, if the Prince promise to the subiect, the noble manne to the meane, the father to the sonne, and among marchauntes one to another, it is accounted so sure, that wee will make our reckoning thereof, as though wee had it in possession: such trust we giue one vnto another: and shall wee then doubt in Gods promise, which hath not only past by wordes, but also by writing sealed, & confirmed with the blood and death of his onely Sonne? Is there any man so mindefull of his promise, or so able to performe the same, as our heauenly father is, of that he promiseth to vs? It is cõmonly seene among men, that leagues, couenantes and bargaines cannot be so wisely made, nor so surely confirmed, but that wythwielie falshood and false vnfaithfulnesse, they are defeated & of none effect. But God is so faithfull in performing the thing to vs, which he promiseth, that heauen and earth shall rather

ther come to nothing, thē one title of his pro-
mise shal be vnperformed. Yeathe y, that mi-
strust or doubte of the suretie of his promise,
are no lesse in doubt whether there bee a God
or no. For or to doubt or denie his truth and fi-
delitie, is to mistruste or denie hym to bee
God. A prince and noble man for his owne
honors sake, a father for hys fatherlike affec-
tion to his chylde, a Merchaunte for his cre-
dite sake will keep their promise: & wold not
our heauenly prince (who as hee hath made
all thinges to serue to his owne glory, so will
not giue the same to any creature) haue hys
honor herein aduaunced and most highly re-
garded, that he is most sure, iuste, and true of
promise? Woulde not our heauenly Father
we should perswade our selues, that his loue
towardes vs doeth farre surmount the affec-
tion of a carnall father to his child? Can any
man so muche esteeme his owne credite, and
estimation of trustines, as he, who is faithful
trueth it selfe, regardeth so to bee knowen
to his creatures? It is the greatest dishone-
stie among men to be vnthankfull, to suspect
or mistrust him, whose friendly fidelitie, and
faithful friendship we haue been sure of at al
times, whensoeuer we haue been in distresse:
much more shame is it, to suspect, mistrust, or

doubt of Gods faithfull assistance, whēsouer we shal haue need, for so much as his faithful friendship, & friendly loue is farre aboue the trustines of man, as heauē aboue ẏ earth, fine gold aboue filthie drosse, & precious pearles aboue dirtie doung. Yea there is no engine, wherwith the diuel worketh so forcibly mās destructiō, which draweth so many frō god, & doth wring forth of gods iustice his fearefull vengeance, as mistrust in gods promise, & incredulitie: On the other part nothing attaineth saluation, bringeth men neere to Gods presence, & draweth forth of Gods mercy his fauourable loue, but only faith & constant affiance in his most sure and faithful promises. The losse of riches, landes, & earthly possessions is a sore griefe: but is not the winning of an hundred fould so much, and the obtaining of an euerlasting kingdome a good value for this sore? If we gaine with the losse of transitorie thinges, heauenly treasures, with the forsaking of worldly friends, Christ to be our deare & sure friend, and with refusing father, mother, brother, sister, wife, childrē, purchase God to be our most mercifull Father, Christ our most louing brother, & to bee loued of the sonne of God, as his deare dearlings, & only beloued Spouse, what haue wee lost? what

greater gain can we haue: or what more pro-
fitable exchãge can be made: This bargaine
and profite hath our heauenly father promi-
ſed vnto vs by a bill of his owne hand, ſealed
with the blood of his onely ſonne, teſtified by
the witnes of his Apoſtles, and left with vs
in our owne cuſtodie to be paide at the ſight,
whenſoeuer we ſhall require it: wherof this
is the content: Who ſo hath forſaken houſe, Mat.9.
brother, ſiſter, father, mother, wife, children,
or landes for my names ſake, hee ſhall re-
ceiue an hundreth folde, and the inheritaunce
of euerlaſting life. Who will denie, but that
hunger, colde, nakednes, extreeme pouerty, &
want of things partly neceſſary, are an hea-
uie burden for man to beare: but the weight
hereof is lightned and made eaſie to thẽ, that
with right eye, & vnfainedly, do beleeue gods
promiſe, and caſt their care on him. Caſt thy
care vpõ the Lord, for he hath care ouer thee. 1.Pet.5.
Your heauẽly father knoweth that you haue
neede of all theſe thynges, meate, drinke and Math.6.
clothes: hee miniſtreth theſe thinges in due
time to the beaſtes of the earth, the foules of
the aire, the fiſhes of the ſea, hee clotheth and
decketh with beautiful apparrel the flowres
of the field, according to his promiſe: and wil
hee not keepe his promiſe vnto vs, for whoſe

sakes he hath made these creatures, and hath
Psalm.8. made vs lords ouer them: What cause haue
we rather to mistrust his promise thē the bird
that flieth forth in the morning vpon this na-
tural persuasion, that she shall finde food, not
doubting, but he, who made her, will not suf-
fer her to sterue with hunger: Haue we seen
such as haue put their trust in him, sterue for
Psal.37. hunger, die of cold, perish through nakednes:
Is it hath not been hard of, that the righteous
hath been forsaken, or his seed (beggs) wan-
Psal.9. ting bread. For they that know the name of
the Lord, will trust therein: for he forsaketh
Math.6. not thē, that seeke after him. Seeke after the
kingdome of God & the righteousnes therof,
& all these things shal be ministred vnto you,
saith Christ. If hee be true that maketh this
promise, why should we feare hunger, cold, or
nakednes: If he be not to be trusted, why wil
we take on vs his name: If wee can not de-
nie, him, but to be most iust of promise, as hee
is in deede, we argue our selues of too much
hypocriticall incredulitie, when we say, that
we would gladly suffer these for his sake, sa-
ying for feare to want necessaries in our
neede, and that we shall not be able to abyde
it. And he hath promised no lesse assistaunce,
ayde, and comforte in all kinde of persecu-

tion,

tion, whether it be imprisonment, banishment, losse of life or any member. Yea, because wee should not faint in prison, ware feeble in exile, giue ouer through feare of ẏ bitter panges & sharpe prickes of death, he hath promised not only to bee reuenged on our persecutors, but also to be present with vs, to helpe, comfort & deliuer vs. Wherefore he hath willed vs in ẏ day of our troubles to call vpon him, adding this promise, that he wil deliuer vs. Wherun to the prophet Dauid did so trust, feeling the comfortable tructh thereof at sundrie times in many & dangerous perils, that hee persuaded himselfe, all feare set apart, eyther of one painefull daunger or other whatsoeuer: yea, if it were to walke in ẏ valley of the shadow of death, that he should not haue cause to feare, comforting himselfe with this saying, which was gods promise made vnto vs al, For thou art with me: Thy rod & thy staffe, euen they shal cõfort me. Is gods staffe wares so weak that we dare not leane too much now theron, least it should breake: Or is he nowe suche a changeling, that he wil not be with vs in our troubles according to his promise: Will hee not giue vs his staff to stay vs by, & reach vs his hand to hold vs vp, as he hath been wõt to do: If he be the selfe same God & no chaunge-

Psal. 50.

Psal. 23.

king, when we bee put into prison, or led into captiuitie, he goeth with vs, or throwen into the sea to be drowned, hee doeth not leaue vs, or cast vs into the raging fire, hee is with vs, to this ende, eyther to deliuer vs from the violent force of them vtterly, or at the least so to comforte vs in the middest of them, that wee shoulde rather take pleasue therein, then feele paine. Wherefore hee cryeth vnto vs continually: Feare not thou little flocke: feare not them, that can doe no more but kill the bodie, that is their vttermost: but nowe the Lorde that made thee (O Iacob) and hee that fashioned thee (O Israel) sayeth thus: Feare not, for I will defende thee, I will cal thee by thy name, thou art mine: when thou wentest in the waters, I was by thee, that the strong floodds shoulde not plucke thee away, when thou walkest in the fire, it shal not burne thee, & the flame shall not kindle vppon thee: For I am the Lorde thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy Sauior. Let the cruel Papistes rage and roare, let the obstinate Sodomites fret and fume, let the rablemēt of Antichristes souldiours, the diuels owne deare dearlings threaten with sacke, swoorde, faggot and fire, yet if God bee with vs, who can be against vs? the mightie, strong, holy one

Math. 10.

Esay. 43.

of

of Israel hath made a faithfull promise, that he wil be with vs, defend & deliuer vs. This promise sufficeth to a Christian to arme him against all feare of trouble, anguish, persecution, hunger, nakednesse, perill, swoorde and death for that none of al these can separate vs from God but wee shall ouercome, and haue the ouerhand in all these thinges through the ayde and comfort of him, who hath loued vs: for he is a faithful God, which will not suffer vs to be tempted aboue our strength, but shal in the middest of temptation make a waye to come out that we may beare it. Who nowe weighing these promises dare surmise that God wyll not aide, comforte, and strengthen you in all necessities? And will you thinke he is not able to performe the thing he willeth? Is the arme of the Lorde shortened? Shall not hee who is able to rayse of stones children vnto Abraham, be of power to comfort, relieue & defend, whom he hath alreadie made? If we be assured of his will, which his promise teacheth vs, wee neede not doubte of his power: for whatsoeuer him pleaseth, hee doeth in heauen, earth, the sea, and in all deep places. If we beleeue his promise, all things are possible, yea there is nothing, but it is easie of him to be done. As a mightie captaine, who

Rom. 8.

Psal. 113. 5.

Mark. 9.

who hath vnder his gouernement many soul-
diers & seruants, hath thē so at his cōmande-
ment, ꝑ when he biddeth thē go, they go: when
he saith abide, they abide: & when he willeth
them to do this or that, they obey his word: so
is paine, pleasure, griefe, ease, sicknes, health,
life, death at the becke & cal of God, that they
come and go at his appointment, as the faith-
full Centurion confesseth in the Gospel. Yea
Math. 8. he worketh so forcibly in his children ꝑ leane
wholy vnto his promise, ꝑ he maketh to them
of paine, a plesure: of griefe, an ease: of sickness
health: & of death, life: as cōtrariwise to ꝑ vn-
beleuing, pleasure, ease, health, life is a werie
irkesome, & painefull death. ¶ When you were
in prosperitie, had ꝑ true religion of Christ a-
mōg you, & were so strōg within your selues,
as no forreine Prince coulde inuade and ouer-
come you, the Lord of hosts turned al vpside
down in the twinkling of an eye, hath wrapt
you vp in aduersitie, choked your whole
realme wt̄ false superstitiō, & giuen you vp in-
to ꝑ rule & gouernment of such leane locusts,
stinging serpents, & spitefull spangers, as no
people haue byn heretofore plagued wt̄al. And
is ꝑ Lordes power not so able to deliuer his
frō these miseries, to restore his true religion,
and vanquishe these Sodomitical Babylo-
nians,

nians, as it was to giue them vp, for a time to bee chaſtened into their ſubiection: Let the Idolatrous Papiſtes aſcribe their victories, and whole felicitie vnto their Idols and God of bread: yet our hope is in the Lorde, who hath made heauen and earth, who can, and will for his owne glorious ſake, ſhew himſelfe to be the onely God of might in giuing ouerthrowe to theſe Idolatours with a ſoudaine confuſion, when they think themſelues moſt ſure, and looke leaſt for it. Let them now for a while frette and fume againſt the Lord and his Chriſt, ſhake off his yoke, and breake his bonds in ſunder: Yet is the Lord in his holy temple, his abiding is in heauen, his eyes beholde theſe ſonnes of men, and laugh them to ſcorne, and at the length ſhall talke with them in his furie, powring vppon them from heauen, ſnares, fyre, and brymſtone, whoſe cup and portion ſhalbe burning, ſtorme and tempeſt. Let them perſuade themſelues, and beleeue darkeneſſe to bee light, trueth falſnes, blindnes ſight, and life death, and bring this to paſſe, that mens eyes may ſeeme with a ſkinne or ſlime of ſuperſtitious ignorancie to bee couered and made blinde, yet can the Lord, and alſo will, when he ſeeth time, reſtore light, trueth, ſight & life againe

Pſal. 2.

to

to the aduauncement of his owne glory, the comfort of his Churche, and vtter confusion of his enemies. Follow therefore after the Lord, crie vnto him with the two blind men, Math. 9. desire him of his mercie to restore your sight, mistrust not but he is able to doe it, say with them that yee so beleeue, and the Lorde will make you answere and performe it in deede: after your faith bee it vnto you. If you trust in the Lorde and confesse him to be omnipotente, why should you feare the cruel tie of Antichrist, who afflicteth Christ in his members, persecuting and punishing their soules with superstition, idolatie and vnbeliefe, and afflicting their bodies with hunger, imprysonment, cryle and painefull death: Hath not God aforetime assisted his to wade thorowe, and ouercome the paines of all these, yea in the midst of the bitter stormes to take great pleasure: And is hee of lesse power to helpe vs: Shall not we now by his assistance be so able to abide, and take pleasure in paines, as our brethren haue beene before vs: My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and through the Ephes. 6. power of his strength learne, to whatsoeuer estate God shal call you, therewith to be content, knowing how to bee lowe, & how to exceede, euery where and in all things instructed

ded both to be full and to be hungrie, both to haue plentie, and to suffer neede, yea, to do al things through Christe, who strengtheneth you, by whom also you shall ouercome. For if you be troubled on euery side, yet shalt you not bee without shift: when you bee vexed with pouertie, you shall not be vtterly without somewhat: wrapt in persecution, not forsaken therein: cast downe, yet perishe not: that the excellencie of the power may bee Gods, and that you may onely glorie in the Crosse of Christe. By the crosse he entred into glorie, and they that are his, must enter in the same way. The Princes had no power ouer him, further then was giuen them from aboue, neither haue they ouer you, no not to plucke of one heare of your head, for they bee all numbred, and not one falleth away without the will of your heauenly Father, who worketh all thinges for the best to all them that loue him. And would wee not haue all thinges worke to our most aduantage? In worldly thinges wee seeke after most gaine, and will we neglect that in heauenly things? For to winne a small summe of money, we will take vpon vs a farre iourney in daunger of robbing, in perils of drowning, and bet for no payne, perswading our selues that

2. Cor. 4.

Mat. 10.

Rom. 8.

God will be with vs, assist and prosper vs in all our trauayle: and shall wee refuse to trauaile by land, to passe the seas, to suffer what paine soeuer thereunto belongeth, to winne the penny of euerlasting life, mistrusting that God will not be with vs, ayde and further vs in whatsoeuer painefull perill we shall come in? O blinde incredulitie, that makest easie thinges to seeme hard by working an vnwillingnes in the mindes of men, whome thou rulest? If men forsake their owne wils, submitting themselues wholly vnto Gods will, what thing can bee to harde? But if we will followe the appetites and delicate niceneſſe of our owne willes, what can be easie? Crie therefore, with Christ, (deare brethren,) Not our willes, but thy will (O heauenly Father) bee done: So eschue troubles, as may stande with his good will and pleasure: When they come vpon you, embrace them willingly, suffer them patiently, wade throwe them faithfully, for that is his good will and pleasure. Followe the example of Christe, of the Prophetes, Apostles, and holy Martyrs, who were not wedded to their owne willes, but submitted themselues wholy vnto Gods wil, who wrought so with them, that in pouertie they wanted not ne-

cessaries,

cellaries, in prison among rauening Lyons they liued harmeleſſe, in the middes of fyre they burnt not, in the moſt cruell tormentes they felt no payne, and truſting to the faithfull promiſe and mightie ayde of their heauenly Father, deſired rather to be exercised vnder the croſſe, to die with Chriſt, then to be at eaſe, and liue with the world. Abraham with his Father Thare forſooke his natiue countrey, and from thence was commaunded to depart into a countrey, whereof hee neither knewe the name, where it was, neyther what commodities were therin for men to liue withall, neyther yet coulde he abide there any while: for a great dearth did oppreſſe the whole lande, ſo that he was compelled to flee into Egypt, where hee was in daunger of much diſpleaſure, for he perceiued before he entred, that he muſt forgoe eyther his wife, or elſe ſuſtaine daunger for keeping her. Hee was conſtrained oftentimes to remoue his habitation not without great loſſe, trauayle and perill. Iacob alſo went forth of his natiue countrey into a ſtraunge place, partly for that his father woulde not that hee ſhoulde be ioyned in mariage, with the daughters of the Idolatours of that countrey, partly to flee the crueltie of

Gen. 11.

Gen. 12.

Gen. 28.

wicked Esau his naturall brother, where hee
serued Laban fourteene yeeres for his two
daughters, in keeping his sheepe: a paine-
Gen. 46. full kinde of labour. Afterwarde in his olde
dayes was constrained by the force of a great
dearth to remoue into AEgypt, where his of-
spring was grieuously molested many yeres.
Ioseph was sold by his brethre to the Ismae-
lites, & by them vnto an AEgyptian, where
he sustained great paine & perill in a straunge
2. Reg. 19 countrey. The Prophet Ely, being persecu-
ted by the wicked Iezabel, fleede from post
to pillar. The Prophet Daniel with a great
Dan. 1. number of good and godly Israelites were
caried into Babylon captines, there to liue
in captiuitie in a straunge countrey a-
mong their deadly enemies. The Apostles
of Christ, and many godly men, and also wo-
men in their time forsooke all they had, and
went into strange countries for the Gospels
sake. And after their time to this our time
the Ecclesiasticall histories are full of the ex-
amples both of men and also women, that
left landes and goods, fleede their countries,
and did choose rather in an vnkoth and vn-
knowen land to liue in harmes with freedom
of conscience, to serue God after his wil, then
to tary at home in wealth with bondage of
con-

conscience, and dishonour the Lorde in disobeying his holy will. It is not read that any of these did murmure and grudge to leaue their houses, lands, goods, & native countrie, fearing the want of friendship, the hatred of straungers, the burden of pouertie, the ragging of hunger, and the lack of things needfarie for mannes life heere, nor yet that they came into any such distresse, that that they had sufficiencie, if not of the first sort, yet such as serued their turne, and they well cõtent therewith. Abraham when hee perceiued it stood with the Lordes will hee should departe, he wyst not whither, nor what shifte to make, did not debate the matter with hym selfe, take counsaill of his friends, cõsult with his wife, whether hee should doe the thing that might pleaseth God or no, but casting apart all persuasion & wisdome of flesh, bowed downe his owne will subiect vnto Gods pleasure, bent himselfe without farther delaye to obey his will, that ought onely to be obeied in all maner of creatures: and therefore in a straunge countrie, yea in the middest of his enemies, had not onely at all times sufficiencie, but also did growe vnto great abundance of riches. Of like sort Iacob was not onely not left destitute of succour, but did come to so

great aboundaunce, that at his returne into
hys Countrie, hee made therewith his moste
mortall foe, his deare friende; and serued
the Lord all his life in great wealth. Ioseph
beeyng a bondman in a straunge countrie,
was not so moued with the feare of false and
slaunderous accusations, of hunger, impri-
sonmente and suche like griefes, that hee
woulde, to eschue these, committe vncleane
thinges against Gods will, but cleauing to
Gods prouidence, was fostered vppe against
the rage of hunger, the violence of impri-
sonment, cleansed from the fowle spottes of
slaunders, set at libertie, and at length made
ruler ouer Aegypt. Although his brethren
meant his destruction, when they solde hym
to straungers, and droue him foorth of his
Gen. 45. natiue countrie, yet hee acknowledgeth this
theyr fact to bee the good will of God, who
woorketh all thinges to the best for them
that loue him, whether it bee hunger, colde,
eryle, imprisonment, or death it selfe, and
maketh that whiche seemeth painefull and
grieuous, easye and pleasaunte. What
shoulde wee saye to the Prophetes Ely and
Daniel? Ely fleeing the fiercenesse of Achab
because hee shoulde not suffer more paine of
hunger, then hee might well awaye wyth

all,

all, was fedde by Rauens sente vnto him morning and euenyng, to bring hym bread and meate for that purpose, and afterwarde by a poore widdowe of Sarepta, and last of all by Gods Aungell, when hee was in a desert, fleeing the crueltie of Iezabel. In like sort Daniel was fedde in the pytton by Habacuc brought by Gods Angell, whereupon Daniel saide: O Lorde thou hast remembred mee, thou doest not forsake them that loue thee. A saying of him, who hadde felt the ease and relefe, that GOD prouideth for all them that vnfaynedly trust in hym, worthie to be written in golden letters, and deepely grauen into our heartes. This is a common and pleasant persuasion to the Apostles, and all other of Christs Churche, who suffered for Christes sake, pouertie, exile, persecution, that in the middest of pouertie they were most ryche, when they had nothing left them at all, then hadde they all thynges, and wanted nothyng. These examples shoulde moue vs to set aparte all feare of want, and to caste our care wholie vppon the Lorde, for so muche as hee is nowe our louing and mercifull Father, then hee was to Abraham or any other: yea, hee hath exhibited vnto vs in deede, and were

3. Reg. 17.

3. Reg. 19.

Dan. 14.

haue seene that Abraham woulde gladly haue beholden. God hath not spared his onely Sonne, but hath giuen him for vs all vnto death: howe muche more will hee giue vnto vs, if wee truste in him, all other necessarie thynges? Is it not a necessarie thyng to haue strength and ablenesse to abyde patiently for his sake, not onelie pouertie, losse of goods, imprisonmente and exile, but also power to passe thorowe easily the burning flames of fire, hanging, drawing, stoning, racking, deuouring with wild beastes, brayling, boyling, and suche kinde of most cruell tormentes and bytter death, as the enemies to Christe, the olde tyraunts and Antichriste hym selfe, the Pope with his cleargie now dayly inuenteth and practiseth to withdrawe and fraie menne from Christe? God hath alwayes too this time giuen his suche strength to ouercome and contemne these and whatsoeuer crueltie coulde be inuented, yea he hath so encouraged them to take pleasure in the middest of most crueltie, that they reioyced moste, when they seemed to be in the greatest paine, as it is playne in manye histories of the Church: and will not GOD deale so mercifully with vs nowe, as wyth them of olde tyme? Is his mercye wa-

Rom. 8.

lesse nowe towardes vs, or his power not so able: GOD is not like vnto man to change his purpose, and to be euery yeere of a newe mynde, hee is faithfull and changeth not, although to the iudgement of the flesshe hee seemeth to forsake the manne that is cast in prison, banished hys countrie, throwen into the fire, and most cruelly dealt withall, yet hee is present with hym, aydeth and comforteth muche more strongly, then the tormentours be able to grieue or discomfort, yea, turneth the bitternesse into sweetenesse, the payne into pleasure, and that, which seemeth vnto others most vntollerable, to bee most sufferable. The three Israelites were commaunded to fall downe and worshippe the golden Image, they did not dissemble the matter, but plainely sayde they woulde not: they were threatened to bee cast into the burning fornace, they feared it not: they might haue dissembled the matter for a time, followyng the worlde, but they knewe God coulde not bee deceiued, nor would not bee played withall. The ouen was made seuen times hotter, then euer before, & they cast into it, yet were they well able to abide it, and hadde much more solace in the burning fyre, then they that onely looked on. The mother with her

Dan. 3.

seuen

2. Mach. 7. seuen sonnes in the Machabees chose rather
1. Mach. 2. to suffer most cruell death, whiche they pas-
2. Mach. 6. sed thorowe moste ioyfullye, then too com-
mitte the least thynge agaynst the Lawe of
Ecclesiast. theyr GOD. So likewyse Mathathias
hist. lib. 6. his sonnes, and Eleazarus, Rhais that Chri-
cap. 4. stian woman, although not yet so fully ca-
techized, that shee was admitted to bap-
tisme, set on fire with the burning heate of
Gods Spirite, and the famous chaste wo-
Eccles. hist. man Doramena with her mother Marcella,
libr. 6. after they had suffred great and horrible tor-
cap. 5. mentes for the truethes sake, were consu-
med in burnynge fyre. Quinta the faith-
Eccle. hist. full woman and constant martyr of Christe,
lib. 6. cap. 41 suffered rather to haue her legges tyed to-
geather, and to bee drawen thorowe the
streetes vppon the sharpe stones, and whip-
ped most sharpelye, then shee would seeme to
worshippe the images or idoles in the Tem-
ples. The constant olde matrone Apollo-
nia was beaten aboute the face till all her
teethe were beaten oute, a greate heape of
wood set on fyre before her face, and threa-
tened to be cast therevnto quick, if she would
not agree to the Idolatours, and dyd wil-
lingly chose to bee burnt in the raging fyre.
Wolikewise the historie sheweth of Ammo-

narion,

nation, Mercuria, Dionysia, and other no-
table woman, that were so vnfearefull to
suffer moste sharpe death, that they woulde
runne, when they hearde, where the execu-
tion was in hand, and carry their young chil-
dren with them (such delight hadde they to
suffer for Christes sake) in great hast as vn-
to a ioyfull feast, fearing nothing els, but that
the tormentours wouldspare them, and that
they should not bee thought worthie to beare
witnesse to Christes death with their owne
blood. Call to your remembrance that faith-
full woman and woorthie martyr of Jesus
Christe your owne countrie woman Anne
Askew: her imprisonment mooued her not,
she little weighed the cruel torture & tearing
her body on the racke, shee ioyfully went to
the fyre, and was of more comfort in feeling
the payne, and lesse wearie thereof, then the
lookers on to beholde, or the tormentours to
doe execution. The history saith, that Theo-
dorus a young manne, was so grieuously tor-
mented with diuers and sundrie kind of tor-
mentes, and at length his bodie so rente and
torne, that they left him for dead: Whome
Rufinus the writer of the Ecclesiasticall
Storie, afterward asked whether he felt not
grieuous paines, whiles hee was in the tor-

ments,

ments, to whom he answered, that he felt verie little payne: For, said he, there stood as he thought, a yong man by him, who alwaies wiped the sweat from him, and so much comforted his stomacke, that the time of the tormenting seemed to him much more pleasant then painfull. Who made the yonge menne walke in the fire and burne not? Who hardened these martyrs of men and women, that they did not shrinke at paine, but ran through fyre, water, and moste cruell tormentes, and not be ouercome? Certainely euen hee, who hadde promised them, that neither in fire, water, no nor yet in the shadowe of death hee would be frō them, but would be their buckler, defendour and shielde, faithfully performing that no temptatiō should assaile thē, but that he would giue a ioyfull end and deliuerance: whereunto they trusted, and so by their constant faith ouercame, and hadde the victorie. For this is the victorie that ouercōmeth the world, euē our faith. Yea as S. Paul saieth, the time would not serue vs, if wee would rehearse howe the Patriarkes, Prophetes, Apostles and Martyrs through faith subdued kingdomes, wrought righteousnes, obtained the promises, stopped ỹ mouthes of Lyons, quenched ỹ violence of fire, escaped ỹ

1. Iohn. 5.

Heb. 11.

edge

edge of ẏ sword, out of weakenes were made strōg, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliants, ẏ women receiued their dead raysed to life againe. Other were racked and would not be deliuered, that they might inherit a better resurrection. Againe, other were tried with mockings, and scourgings, moreouer with bonds and imprisonmentes, were stoned, were hewen in sunder, were tempted, were slaine with sworde. And these all through faith obtained good report. The holy Ghost hath caused these histories to be kept in writing for vs, ẏ are nowe in ẏ latter dayes, to this end, that we should not only beholde in them the firie raging of the worlde from the beginning against the chosen people of God, & how stoutly they withstood & ouercame by faithful patience the malice thereof, but also that by reading of thē, we shoulde in our like troubles, learn like patience, receiue the same comfort, & being thorowly tryed, cōceiue a sure hope of the same victorie, which they after many and sundrie trials did win: whereof we shal not be disappointed, if we to ẏ end striue lawfully. If it be to hard & aboue your capacitie to behold al ẏ histories & examples propounded in the scriptures, & the chronicles of Christs church with such consideration,

tion, that you may espie & behold in them the order of Gods working with his Church in all ages, wherby to perceiue these your grieuous chaunges to be no newe and vnwonted worke of God. If you doe not perceiue & see in them the true & iust cause, which mouetb the Lord hereunto, & thereby to learne faithfull repentance: & if you do not vnderstand in diligent perusing them, that the end and issue was alwayes ioyfull and glorious victorie & deliuerance, wherewith to comfort your selues in the middes of miseries, take into your handes the comfortable history of King Dauid, marke his whole life from that time he was taken from his fathers sheepe to his death: behold in him, your selues: in the people during the time of his rule, the Church of Englande: and in the wonderfull iudgement of God in ordering his Church then, what shalbe the ende of his sharp crosse, wherwith he doth exercise you at this time. And to the ende you may the better see, how to wade in considering his whole life, we haue disclosed and opened for you to beholde a part therof: wherein you shall see plainely, that the grieuous afflictions of euery one of you seuerally, and of the whole Church of Englande together, is not fallen by chaunce of euill or good

good fortune, but by the mightie hande of God, whose good will it is thus to haue you tried for a while, also for what cause GOD thus worketh, and what shalbe the end of all these doings. After the Lorde had found out Dauid, a man after his owne minde, and appointed him King ouer his people, who laboured worthily to deliuer and defend Gods people from their enemies the Idolatours, that dwelt neere about thē, he did not graunt to him such quietnes, neither to his people, but that he was in continuall troubles, and no small daungers, during the life of Saul, and also after his death, the Idolatours, and also Sauls friendes, seeking al the ways that might be, to disturbe him foorth of his kingdome. And not onely was he thus vexed with his forraine enemies, but also most grieuously of all, by those of his housholde, who shoulde haue bin his most deare friends, his own naturall sonne Absalom, his most priuie Counselours, ẏ nobilitie of his Realme, and ẏ most part of his subiectes. Absalom pretending 2. Reg. 15.
to his father Dauid a great holinesse (as the maner of the hypocrites is) desired to haue leaue to goe into Hebron, there to doe sacrifice for the performance of a vowe, which he had made in the time of his being in Syria.

but

but his meaning was to obtaine the kingdome from his Father, and to stirre al Israel against him, which he brought to passe: Dauid was banished, and pursued vnto ẏ death by his owne sonne, who wrought so much villanie against his father, that he did not forbeare in the despite of him, to misuse his fathers wiues in the sight of all the people: howe grieuous and dangerous this sodaine change was to Dauid, and to the godly people, which were but a very fewe in respect of the great number of the malicious hypocrites, which followed Absalom, it appeareth plainely in the storie, and you may easely consider. The best that was like to come of the matter, was, that whiles the kingdome of Israel was thus deuided, Gods enemies the Philistians, who had lyen long in wait therefore, shoulde snatche vp from both the parties the kingdome of Israel, and not onely vtterly banishe Gods true religion from among the Israelites, but also bring thē, their countrey, and their posteritie into most miserable bondage and thraldome, and that, to Gods enemies the most vile people, and hated of all the worlde. Dauid in all these perilous daungers of his owne life, losse of his kingdome, & vtter destruction of Gods people,

ple, did not diſcourage himſelfe, but vnderſtanding all this to bee the wooꝛke of Gods own hand, acknowledging the true cauſe vnfainedly, did perſuade himſelf that the Looꝛd after a time, when his good will ſhould bee, woulde geue a comfooꝛtable ende to al theſe ſooꝛmes and bitter pangꝭ. His whole behauiour hee himſelfe deſcribeth in a Pſalme, which is left in wꝛiting fooꝛ vs to learn thereafter how to behaue our ſelues in ẏ like perſecutiõs. When he was fled from Ieruſalem, and the Pꝛieſts were departed frõ him with the Arke of the Looꝛdes Couenaunt, he went vppon mount Oliuet barefoote, wepte as he went, and had his head couered and ſo did all the people that were with him. And he made his mone vnto the Looꝛde, ſaying, O Iehoua, how are they increaſed that trouble me: how many are they that riſe againſt me, how many are they that ſay of my ſoule, There is no helpe fooꝛ him in his God: Selah. Woonder not though this good King with an heauye heart, and ſooꝛowfull cheere doth lament and bewaile his dooꝛous eſtate. Woulde it not grieue a King, when he thinketh of no ſuche matter, ſodainly to be caſt out of his Royall ſeate, and bꝛought in daunger of his lyfe, and that by hys owne naturall Sonne:

Pſal. 3.

2. Reg. 15.

Pſalm. 3.

Can the displeasure of any enemie so much pearce the heart of a kinde father, as the vnnaturall cruelcie of the sonne to seeke his death, of whome he himselfe had his life? It grieued him no small deale to perceiue such as had bene his wise Counsailours, whom he much trusted, (whose duetie it had bene, with the spending of their owne liues, to haue defended the common weale brought to good and quiet order, both in matters of policie, & of Gods true religion,) to be the supporters and mainteiners of an hypocrite, who had neither respect to Gods true honour, nor yet consideration of duetie to his most honourable Father, neither yet regarde to the prosperous weale of his natiue countrey. But nothing of all these grieued him so much, as this one thing, the remembrance and true acknowledging in himselfe, that he himselfe was the onely cause of all these euils. He called to his remembrance, that these plagues fell vpon him sent from God, whose worke it was, and that for his sinnes, whiche were the cause thereof, and this made him weepe and mourne. For so soone as the Prophet Nathan had warned him of his offence, hee cryed, peccaui, I haue sinned: and afterward when hee sawe this grieuous and sodaine

2 Reg. 12.

chaunge

chaunge folowe, he perceiued it came partly for his sinne by the worke of God, and therefore submitted himselfe wholy to Gods will, saying, If I shall finde fauour in the eyes of the Lorde, he will bring me againe, and shewe me both his Arke and the Tabernacle thereof: but, and the Lorde thus say, I haue no lust vnto thee, beholde here am I, let him do with mee what seemeth good in his eyes. 2.Reg.15.

Thus the worthy man of God acknowledgeth his troubles to bee of Gods hande, his sinnes to be the cause, and therefore humbly and faithfully submitteth himselfe to Gods ordering, wel content to receiue whatsoeuer should be layd vpon him. He assured himselfe that when hee himselfe were most weakest, then God woulde declare his strength for his owne glories sake, and after he were reduced to a faithfull repentaunce by the correction of his mercifull Father, then the rod would be cast into the fire. This consideration of plagues both to priuate men particularly, and also of Realmes & whole common Wealthes is diligently to be weyed, that as they come from God, so haue they this ende, that they tende partly to his owne glorie, partly to our profite, and amendement. For although sinne is the generall cause where-

for all mankinde generally was, is, & shalbe molested with manye and sundrye kyndes of troubles and calamities, yet the calamities & afflictions are not to all kinde of men alike, nor yet for one end and purpose. For the wicked and reprobate are punished & whipped of God to a farre other end and meaning, then the godly and chosen children, who are the true church of god, ẏ liuely mẽbers of Christ, & such as shal neuer be separated from God & his louing fauour in Christ Jesu. These although they be neuer without trouble in this world, but alwayes exercised vnder ẏ crosse, yet the cause and consideration why God wil haue them thus exercised, is either for the glorie and honour of his owne Name, or the profite, commoditie, and exceeding benefit of them whom he thus afflicteth, either else for both these considerations together, for that there is no trouble that commeth to Christs church or any mẽber therof, which appeareth not plainely to redound to Gods glory, & the profit of ẏ afflicted, if it be wel & iustly cõsidered. These two causes & considerations doth the Scripture teach in all calamities of the church, whether they be generall or particular, which being wel marked, will easily put out of ẏ way this stũbling block, wherat many

ny stumble & fall, marueyling wherfore God wil suffer his word, & his chosen childrē thus to be vsed & euil dealt withal. The childrē of Israel were in Egypt most cruelly delt with all 400. yeeres, oppressed with most painfull labours, most seruile exactions, their infants slaine, they cried vnto ỏ Lord, their griefs increased, for God had hardened Pharao hys hearte, that he shoulde not ease or deliuer his people. Wherefore did God thus afflict his people, and stirred this cruell tyrant so grieuously to vex thē: truely for his owne glory, & their profite. God rehearseth this cause and cōsideratiō in ỏ scripture, of the hard & cruell hearts of ỏ Egyptians towardes his people, The Egyptians shal know ỏ I am ỏ Lorde, and that I will deliuer my people by strong hand frō among thē. For this purpose (saith God to Pharao) haue I raised thee vppe, that in thee I may declare my power throughout the whole worlde. This profit they receiued the exercise of their fayth, the tryall of theyr patience, and the confirming of theyr hope for deliueraunce, whiche was not deceiued. Thus S. Paule noteth and collecteth of this historie, the one ende to bee Gods glory, for the honourable fame and renowme of his name throughout the whole worlde, and also

Exod. 7.

Exod. 9.

Rom. 9.

the profit that the afflicted receiue, which is
Heb. 11. the exercise of faith, as hee noteth of Moses & his parentes to the Hebrues. But muche more plainely doth S. Paule note & teach these two considerations to the Corinthes, saying,
2. Cor. 4. But wee haue this treasure in earthen vessels, that that power which excelleth, might bee of God, and not of vs. Wee are troubled on euery side, yet are wee not without shifte: we are in pouertie, but not vtterly wythout somewhat: we are persecuted, but we are not forsaken: wee are oppressed, neuertheless we perysshe not. But seeing wee haue the same Spirit of faith (according as it is written, I beleeued, and therefore haue I spoken) wee also beleeue, and therefore wee speake. For we knowe that he which rayled vp the Lord Jesus, shall rayse vs vp also by the means of Jesus. Therefore wee are not wearie, but though our outwarde manne bee corrupt, yet the inward man is renued day by day. For our trouble, whiche is but temporall and lyght, worketh an exceeding and an eternall weight of glory vnto vs. What can Saint Paul speake more for the commendation of Gods praise and glorie, then that the excellencie of his mightie power is declared and aduaunced in this, that his are troubled, impouveri-

pouerishes, persecuted, oppressed, and yet in all these doe not perishe nor faynt, but ouercome by him, who hath willed his in all their troubles to call vppon him, and he will so deliuer them, that hys name shall thereby bee glorified, and honoured: And what greater profite can come to the Churche, then to haue the faith of Gods children so exercised, that the inwarde man may be renued day by day, and that as Christe entred into his glorye by troubles, the crosse, and death, so also our troubles, which are but short and light in respect of his, may worke vnto vs an exceeding and eternall weight of glory. Both these two things S. Paul noteth in the generall afflictions of Christes Churche, and also the Scripture teacheth the selfe same generall causes of the troubles of euery priuate member of Christ. As our Sauiour Christ reporteth of the infirmitie of the borne blind man, which was for this cause, sayeth hee, that the workes of God shoulde bee shewed on him. And in like case when Christe heard tell that Lazarus was sicke, he said, This sickneſſe is not to death, but for ý praise of God, that the sonne of God might be praised therethrough. This did much set forth the glory of God in Christ, that he was of power to raise vp from

Iohn. 9.

death a mã, which had bin in his graue buried 4. daies, & was so corrupted in that hee did stink. And wherin doth ẏ power of God more exceedingly appeare to his glory, thẽ in raising his church & faithfull people frõ the graue & pit of troubles, afflictiõs, & many intollerable miseries, wherein the worlde goeth about to tread them downe, and bury thẽ: Doeth not Christ herein most marueilously set forth his glory, ẏ when the worlds by motion of ẏ diuill doth furiously fret & rage against his faithful to roote out his word, then it springeth & florisheth most plentifully, & the faithful are fastened & confirmed therin most vnfaignedly & boldly: This hath God wrought in all ages in ẏ fire of troubles and afflictiõs, trying his faithfull children for his owne honors sake & their profit as appeareth in ẏ histories of the church frõ ẏ beginning. And beside this that our faith is thus tried, our patiẽce proued, our hope cõfirmed by these afflictions, ẏ faithfull do receiue also diuers other commodities & profites by troubles which are more necessarie to them then either meat or drinke: The worldly ones set more by their easie life here to serue their idle bellies, thẽ by ẏ necessary & profitable things to eternal life. By troubles & afflictions the faithfull are made of like &

sem-

semblable shape to the image of Gods owne
sonne Jesus Christ, saith S. Paul, If they suf- Rom. 8.
fer with Christe, they shall liue with him in
glory. Whō the Lorde loueth, him he chaste- Heb. 12.
neth, yea & hee scourgeth euery sonne, whom
he receiueth, & nourtereth vs to that, whiche
is profitable, ý we might receiue of his holi-
nes. And to ý Corinthians S. Paul sayth, that
when we are afflicted, we are chastened of the
Lord, that we should not be damned with the
world. Thus the scriptures do teach plainly
& also abundantly, that for these two conside-
rations, God doth suffer his Churche to bee
afflicted, & his owne people in this worlde to
be exercised vnder ý crosse: which appeareth
in all ages by the examples of all histories.
For behold the face of gods church from that
good king Dauid vnto this our time, and you
shall see what wonderfull changes and grie-
uous ouerthrowes his people haue suffered
alwaies, & therfore should not marueil of this
our chaunge in England. After Dauid was
anointed king ouer Gods people, ý 2. booke
of Samuel declareth with what troubles god
did exercise him, & his whole kingdome du-
ring his time. But hee obserued the ordinan-
ces of the Lord, and kept the true religion a-
mong his people according to the comman-

dement

ꝑ. vement of God. After him Salomon hath gouernance of Gods people, who in the beginning of his raigne walked after his Father
3. Reg. 11. Dauid, did build Gods temple, and obserued the true religion, but that lasted but a while: for in his later yeres he fell to idolatrie & the seruice of false gods, so that the true seruice of God began then to be corrupted. After him his sonne Roboam reigned, at whose beginning y realme had such a miserable chaunge, that it could neuer after recouer it self again: for the kingdom was deuided, and 10. tribes which were called afterward Israel, fel from Roboam, and frō the true religion vnto idolatrie, and false seruing of god, & so continued in false superstitious religiō, alwayes hating the true seruice of God, killing the prophets that did teach the truth, and the godly people that confessed the same many yeres: and yet all that time perswaded themselues that they hadde the true seruice of God, and that their doinges did much please God: yea the face of Gods Church was so blemished and brought to such a small nūber of true professours, that the Prophet Ely complaineth, that ther was not one left, but he himselfe alone, whose life also they sought after. Consider well this historie, and the working of God with hys

Church

Church and true religiō. The prophet Samu
el hadde taught the people the true seruice of
God: the worthy king Dauid maintained the
same all his time, but with great difficultie.
Salomon his sonne a Prince of most wisdom
and knowledge, perfectly instructed in the
wayes of the Lorde, fell from God, and cor-
rupted Gods religion with the false seruices
inuented by man, so that the Lord was so of-
fended therewith, that hee cutte off from the
rule of his posterity the most part of the king
dome: for the tenne tribes were neuer after
him vnder the gouernance of his succession,
neither did afterwarde walke in the feare of
God, but in Idolatrie and false religion, till
at the last God sent the Assyrians to inuade
them in that wise, that they ouercame them,
carried them foorth of their owne countrie,
dispearsed them in many countries among
the heathen, sent straungers to inhabite their
land, and so vtterly destroyed that kingdom.
God defende the Realme of Englande from
the like punishment. This was a fearefull
iudgement of God, where hee had but one
small kingdome in the whole worlde, that
bare the face his Churche, where his true
honour was maintained and that so sodainly
of twelue tribes ten should fall from God to

idolatry,

wolatrie, and falſe religion: yea and the other alſo, during all ỳ time of Roboam, and his ſonne Abia after him, ſo ỳ during al this time there was not in the world any Churche or people, where the ſincere religion and pure worde of God was receiued by publike authoritie & common order: although God reſerued alwaies ſom that priuatly feared him and feared his name faithfully, who were alwayes ſo hated and puniſhed by the Idolaters, that their liues were bitter vnto them. In thoſe daies did ỳ Idolaters make the ſelf ſame reaſons & arguments againſt the Prophetes and their doctrine, which your Idolaters doe make nowe againſt Gods people & his true religion. The faithfull then liued among thoſe Idolaters wyth no leſſe feare, trouble and perſecution, then the chriſtians doe nowe in Englande. The Prophets were then impriſoned, & driuen out of their countrie like ſeditious heretiks, the cauſers of al euill, as the true preachers now in Englande are partly impriſoned, partly driuen out of the Realme. After the death of theſe wicked Kinges of Iehuda, God viſited his people wyth ſome lyghte of the trueth by the meanes of Aza, and King Ioſaphat after him: who reſtored, although not perfectelye,

ly, the true religion, baniſhed the falſe, and deſtroyed the Altars of the Idolaters. The which reformation was not done without great difficultie and trouble, and continued but a ſmall tyme in that ſame order. For Ioram the ſonne of King Ioſaphat ouerthrewe the true ſeruice of GOD, condemned it, and brought, in the place thereof the ſuperſtitions, and Idolatries of the Kinges of Iſrael, and ſo the Church continued neuer perfectly reformed, but alwaies afflicted, til the time of Ezechias. For although Aza, Ioſaphat, Ioaz, Amazias. Vzzias, and Ioatham, attempted a reformation, and were indifferently good Kinges, yet was not the Churche clenſed of all the Idolatries, and falſe counterfeit religion, as it appeareth by the Prophets, Ely, Amos, Eſay, Ozea, Micha. But the worthy King Ezechias in the firſt yere of his reigne begã to reforme the religion, brake downe and baniſhed al Idols and Images, hil altars, and whatſoeuer was againſt Gods commaundement, reſtoring Gods true religion after the rule of Gods worde. The which thing as he brought to paſſe not without great troubles and difficulties, ſo it continued in puritie but a litle time. For his Sonne, wicked 3. Reg. 22.

Manaſſes,

Manasses, who reigned after him, put away, and did forsake the true way: and brought in againe all manner of Idolatrie and false religion, and did grieuously punishe and persecute the faithfull people, and true Prophets. He shed (saith the Scripture) innocent bloud exceeding abundantly. In like maner did his sonne Ammon also, who reigned after him. This grieuous change remained thus, vntill the good King Iosias made a new and godly reformation: which ought to bee a glasse to all Princes to beholde them selues in. But this godly reformation of this good King did not continue: for his sonne, and all the Kings of Iehuda after him forsooke the wayes of God, and restored againe the Idolatrie, and false religion of their forefathers, and so continued, till God sent the King of Babylon to destroye their citie, Temple and countrey. Who also led them captiue into Babylon, where they continued many yeres in great affliction: as it appeareth by the Prophets, Ieremie & Daniel, so that in fiue hundreth yeres and aboue, in the dayes of al the Kinges of Iehuda Gods religion was set forth, and receiued in publike order syncerely and perfectly, & the cõtrarie vtterly banished and abolished, but onely in the times of Da-

4.Reg.21.

4.Reg.22.

uid,

uid, Ezechias and Iosias: as Iesus the son of Sirach witnesseth, saying, all Kings except Dauid, Ezechias & Iosias committed wickednes: for euen the Kings of Iehuda also forsooke the lawes of God. With what difficultie and troubles, Gods religion and true seruice was restored after the return of Gods people from Babylon, and how short a time it continued in puritie, what troubles and grieuous persecutions the true seruaunts of the Lord suffered, it is partly set forth in Esdras, and Nehemiah: after in Hester, & then in the Machabees: And although vnto the comming of Christ, there was an outwarde face and beautiful shewe of Gods religion among the Iewes, yet was it so defaced, and vtterly falsified with traditions of the Pharises, who were that time in estimation, that Christ him selfe doeth testifie, that their seruice was but vaine traditions of men, and the commaundement of God was not obserued. All that time there were no Prophetes to instructe them in the right waye. For immediately after the captiuitie, al prophecying ceassed in Israel. Nowe peruse the history of our Sauiour Christ in the foure Euangelistes, and you shal perceiue in what state Christ found his true religion, what

Matth. 15.

paines

paines and trauayle he tooke to restore the true and syncere honouring of God, with howe great difficultie hee brought it to passe, and at the last, howe it cost him his life. After whose death the crueltie of them, who woulde seeme to haue and mainteine
Act. 8. the true honouring of GOD, ceased not, but stirred most vehement persecution against the true Churche of Christe, and dispersed it thorow out all the worlde: with what paynes, troubles, and difficultie true Christianitie was planted, and false religion put away, S Lucas partly mentioneth in the Actes of the Apostles, who spent their liues in the building of Christ his Church. After Christ his death the cruell tyrant Nero the Emperour did persecute the Churche most cruelly, after whose time, the Church was in some quiet, but not long: for Domitian the Emperour did persecute Christ his Church to destroye his true religion most hainously. Nerua his successour was friendly to the Christians. Traiane after him a cruel persecutour, and enemie: and then Hadriane: after whose time the Churche had reste for a whyle. For shortly after, the Christians that were in Asia, and also in the West parties, were cruelly disquieted. Shortly after

this

this time did England receiue the Christian faith, and was the first countrey of all the world that receiued ỳ faith of Christ by publique authoritie (Lucius beeing their first Christian King,) but the purity of Christ his truth did not long there continue, not much aboue an hundreth yeeres. Seuerus the Emperour wrought all the meanes that might be, to destroy Christes Church, and to subuert the true religion with most sharpe persecution; after whose time there was some quiet: but shortly after ỳ cruel tyrant Maximinus did sore molest the faithfull, and likewise after him Decius, Gallus, Hostilianus, Lucius Valerianus, Galienus granted the Christians peace. Aurelianus did persecute them. And Diocletianus more like an infernall serpent, then an earthly man, did as it were deuoure the Church most cruelly. In this time was the greatest persecution, that had beene before. The tormentours were much more wearie in sheading the Christian bloud, and cruelly tormenting the faithfull, then the holy martyrs were in suffering the paines. There were in this persecution within thirtie dates aboue seuenteene thousande Christians killed most spitefully. But Constantine the good Emperour became a Chri-

Euseb. ecclesiast. lib. 8. cap. 9.

stian, set the Church in peace, & was the first Emperour that did by publike authority put downe gentilitie, and truely maintained the Christianitie. But that lasted not long: for within short time after, Iulianus th'apostata being Emperour, wēt about to undoe al that Constantine had done, vsed wonderfull policies to destroy the Christian religion, and did afflict the faithfull very grieuously. After this time the Church was grieuouslie molested by the Arrians, after with Hunnes, Vandals, and Gothes, and so continued manie yeeres till all good learning began wonderfully to be decayed, and at the length albeit the Church seemed to bee at rest, yet hath it been euen to this day miserablie afflicted, and the pure religion vtterly defaced, by two vicars the Deuill put in commission at one time about eight hundreth yeeres since, the Antichrist of Rome for the West, and Mahomet for the East. Nowe weye and consider with your selues this same briefe rehearsall of the state of Gods Church, howe the Church of the Israelites was afflicted in AEgypt, therein the time of the Iudges, neuer vnder the Kinges, at the last caried into a straunge countrey captiues, after their returne and repairing of the Temple what

great perils and troubles it sustained till after the dayes of the Machabees. next consider the history of Christ, and the Actes of the Apostles. After this the ten notable persecutions the Church suffered vnder most cruell tyrantes from the eight yere of Nero, by the space of three hundreth and twentie yeeres, vnto the time of Constantine, and from his time three hundreth yeeres after by the Arrians, and barbarous Hunnes, Vandals and Gothes, by whose meanes good learning was decayed, and ignorancy brought in: And then marke with aduisement, how that from that time hitherto Mahomet hath vsurped and afflicted the East Church, and the Pope the West (for he began to exercise his proud power ouer the Churche about the same time, that Mahomet brought in his religiō) consider I say with aduisement in all these times, howe litle while Gods religion was mainteined in the Churche, what perilous chaunges were in the kingdomes, what exceeding crueltie was alwayes vsed against the people of God, as though they had beene heretikes, his worde condemned as heresie, and the cause of all euils: and you shall perceiue that this is no newe or vnkoth thing, that the true religion of God should be thus

put away and condemned, and the faithfull Churche molested and afflicted both generally as is plaine in these histories, and also particularly in the ministers & faithfull members, as appeareth in Abel, the Patriarches, Prophets, Christ, his Apostles, & in a great number of holy saincte and martyrs, since the death of Christ til now our dayes. Thus may you plainly see how God hath wrought with his Church at all times, and therefore should not discourage your selues, because of this sodain change, but with Dauid acknowledging your sinnes to God, declare vnto him how many they be, that vere you, & rise against you, naming you heretikes and the childrē of Belial, as they named Dauid. Let the wicked Idolaters boast and bragge that they haue ouercome you, and that God hath giuen you ouer & will no more be your God: let thē put their trust in Absolom with his long golden lockes, and in the wisedome of Achitophel the wise counsailour, yet say you with Dauid, thou O Lord art my defender, thou art my worship, and the lifter vp of my head, feare not their violence to hurt you in your bodies, to harme you in your goodes. Perswade your selues with Dauid that the Lord is your defender, who hath cōpassed you

round

round about, and is as it were a shielde, that doeth couer you on euery part: it is he onely that may and will compasse you about with glory and honour, it is hee, that will thrust downe those proude hypocrites from their seate, and exalt his lowly and meeke. Dauid in the midst of his miseries did thus comfort him selfe, leaning to the prouidence of God, looking for deliueraunce from him, appointing God no time, but committing the whole matter vnto his wisedome and goodnesse. He laide himselfe to sleepe, rose againe, was not afraied for innumerable people, that set him round about to haue destroyed him, for ỹ Lord wil sustaine me, saieth this good king. This was his shot ankor, heere was his refuge, heerewith he comforted him selfe, that the Lorde would be his defendour and sauegarde, and at the length restore him to his place againe. Hee armed himselfe with the armour of God, but aboue al he tooke to him the shielde of faith, wherewith hee quenched the fiery darts of the wicked. Hee hadde the helmet of saluation, the swoorde of the spirite, the promises of God, and buckled these fast vnto him selfe with this long and durable girdle of faithfull prayer and watching, saying, I wil crie vnto the Lord with my voice, Ephe. 6

and hee will heare mee from his holy hill. If you will receiue comfort, crye with Dauid vnto the Lorde, exercise your faith in earnest and continuall prayer, say, arise O Lord and helpe me, and hee will smite your enimies on the cheekebone, and burst all their teeth in sunder, he will hang vp Absalom by his own long haire, Achitophel through desperation shall hang himselfe, the bandes shall be broken, and you deliuered: for this belongeth to the Lord to saue his from their enemies, and to blesse his people. Thus Dauid in the mids of his affliction did comfort himself, trust to the onely prouidence of his most mercifull God, perswading himselfe both of his good will & mighty power, whereby he shoulde haue deliuerance, and was not deceiued. This blessing shal also be on you, if that neglecting the wisdome of the worlde, you submitte your selues to the correction of God your heauenly Father, faithfully crying him mercie, and patiently abiding his good will and pleasure.

FINIS.

# A conference,

## Conteyning a Conflict had with Satan, wherein are plainly set down the true markes and tokens whereby the afflicted conscience may proue it selfe, whether it be the childe of God, or the childe of Satan:

Most comfortable for all those which are cast downe with the burthen of their sinne.